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MEMOIRS

OF A

PRISONER OF STATE

IN THE FORTRESS OF SPIELBERG;

BY

ALEXANDER ANDRYANE,

FELLOW-CAPTIVE OF COUNT CONFALONIERI;

WITH AN APPENDIX BY MARONCELLI,

THE COMPANION OF SILVIO PELLICO.

TRANSLATED BY

FORTUNATO PRANDI.

COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

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MEMOIRS

OF

A PRISONER OF STATE.

CHAPTER I.

THE moment we had entered the gates of Spielberg, the prison where my youth, perhaps my whole life, was to pass in suffering, the Serjeant Pavese looked at us with compassion and exclaimed, "Here then we are arrived!" Accustomed as he was to such gloomy scenes, even his voice faltered at the aspect of the fortress whose name strikes terror throughout the Austrian dominions. "This, to be sure, is not the prettiest place in the world," he resumed after a slight pause; "but you will not remain here for ever. Besides, to men like yourselves, the jailers will afford every indulgence consistent with their duty. It is impossible but that they should become attached to you, as we have on our journey."

"I am certain they will," said a young gendarme, brushing a tear from his eyes. "Who would not com-

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passionate these gentlemen, so affable and so resigned to their fate? By my faith, if I gained a first prize in the lottery, I would go to the Emperor and say, "Your Majesty, only set them at liberty, and I renounce the prize I have won."

At these words of commiseration our eyes filled with tears; and again, for the last time, we were thanking these good people for the interest they had taken in us throughout, when suddenly our carriage stopped.

As soon as I got out, I turned round to look at the place. It was an oblong square, surrounded on every side with buildings, whose narrow grated windows, and low iron-studded doors, would have filled us with dismay had we been there merely as visitors. How my imagination strove to conjecture the miseries, the tortures endured behind those massive bolts and bars!

My meditations were soon interrupted by the Commissary Bolza and his men, who led me away. After passing through several dark corridors, we came to a door where two jailers were posted, each with a bunch of keys in his hand. I entered, and found myself in the presence of the Director-General of Police of Moravia, who was sitting at a table, together with the Commandant of Spielberg and some other officers. They were just taking down the last answers of Borsieri, who was immediately led out of the room. After a few minutes I underwent a similar jailer-like formality, and, at the signal of the Director-General of Police, the Commandant himself accompanied me to my prison.

When the door was opened, and I saw before me the dark den in which they were about to entomb me, I could not help exclaiming in agony, "Merciful God! am I condemned to live in such a place as this?" And struck with stupor, not daring to advance a step, I contemplated, without yet distinguishing anything, that gloomy dwelling, which methought the dead alone ought to have entered.

"Come, in with you!" cried the jailer, pushing me forward roughly: "in with you!" The push was so violent that, had I not luckily seized a bar fixed in the wall, I must have fallen head-foremost on the floor. I turned round to remonstrate against such brutality, but the door was already locked.

Without leaving hold of the bar, I now raised my eyes to the ceiling, and beheld the grated air-hole through which a glimmer of light forced its way. I then surveyed the interior of my cell. A pallet-bed, a pitcher, and a tub formed the whole of the furniture. Used as I was to the nakedness of prisons, and the privation of everything most essential to life, this utter destitution made my heart shrink. I turned round to lean my head against the wall, and two enormous chains suspended from the iron bar caught my eye. Good God! at the idea that I might be fastened to that bar, and prevented even scrambling up to the window to inhale a mouthful of fresh air, a cold shudder ran through my frame.

To divert from my mind this horrible thought, I made an attempt to reach the opening which was the object of all my wishes. But my short and heavy fetters rendered this so extremely difficult, that, in spite of teh greatest efforts, I was at last compelled to renounce the hope of that solace. Exhausted with fatigue, and overwhelmed with grief, I seated myself on my couch, vainly striving to keep my eyes from gazing on those chains which, after cramping the death-struggle of their former victims, were now destined———

I was still a prey to these wretched forebodings, when the Commandant of Spielberg again made his appearance, leading in Colonel A——, who, like myself, started back on first beholding the frightful abode.

The Commandant had left the room, and I was about to offer the Colonel some consolation, when one of the keepers entered, and beckoned me with his finger to follow him. I arose immediately, and pacing step by step after my silent guide, I came to a small room, where the first thing that attracted my attention was a large window. I eagerly approached, to enjoy the beautiful prospect around Spielberg,—woods, hills, rivulets, green fields, and here and there a nook of the town peeping out amidst the trees. My withered heart revived at the sight. I bent my head against the casement, and longed for such a landscape to feast my eyes upon from my prison.

I was interrupted by my leader, who imperatively pointing to a chair signed to me to sit down. Scarcely had I obeyed this dumb mandate, when a man entered carrying an anvil and a hammer. To my great joy he immediately applied himself to my fetters. Placing one of my legs on the anvil, he hammered away with such force at the rivet that I involuntarily trembled.

During this operation I had an opportunity of noticing the singular figure of my conductor. Of a spare make, and about six feet in height, this Schiller (such was his name), whose rugged face betokened him some seventy years of age, had that military air only observable in old soldiers, who, either from habit or enthusiasm, retain a parade demeanor to their dying day. Nothing could be better brushed than the coat, cleaner than the white close-fitting pantaloons, or brighter than the long boots and sabre, of this old veteran, whose bunch of keys dangling in one of his hands betrayed his present office of jailer. Light hair, not yet whitened by age, pale blue eyes overshadowed by bushy grey brows, a ruddy nose, a mouth wide and slightly contracted, and a chin large and prominent, gave his gaunt figure an air of simplicity and cunning which puzzled one as to his character. When, after bestowing a stolid smile on the smith, he relapsed into his imperturbable gravity, I began to speculate whether I had more to fear or hope from this type of the old Austrian grenadier.

Delighted at being released from my fetters, I sprang briskly from my chair, and darted to the window; then again sprang back, and leaped about the room, much to the amusement of old Schiller and the smith.

"Tomorrow," said the latter in broken French, "I shall see you again."

These words, of which I but too well caught the meaning, calmed my joy, by recalling to my mind the dreaded iron bar in my cell. "Tomorrow," I said, touching the chain and pointing to my legs and arms, "tomorrow you will put these on again."

"I do not understand you," he replied in German.

I then took the chain, and after placing it on the different parts of my body, and putting myself against the wall, I managed at last to make him comprehend that I expected to be chained to the iron bar in my dungeon. The smith then explained the subject of my fears to Schiller, and the latter, puffing out his cheeks, began laughing and whistling in so grotesque a manner that I could not help following his example.

"No, no!" said the old soldier in German, when his mirth had a little subsided. To this he added something which I could not make out, and his comrade was unable to translate in French. His constant repetition of the word No, no! however, completely reassured me.

On returning to my prison, scarcely had the door closed upon me than, mindless of Colonel A——, I profited by the liberty of my limbs to climb up to the window. "I can see mountains, trees, fields, the suburbs of Brünn, and a large square!" I cried exultingly: "Colonel, why do you not come here and enjoy this beautiful scene?"

Not receiving any reply, I looked at him again, and repeated the invitation. Without moving from the pallet, on which he was seated, he replied, "Alas! my sciatica will not allow me."

I then for the first time observed, that during my absence they had brought a mattress into the cell, a piece of furniture rather scarce in Spielberg, but granted as an extreme favour to my companion. This preference, in reminding me of the shameful conduct by which he had gained it, awakened in my heart all its former antipathy.

I felt such indignation that I was on the point of crying out, "Heavens! what have I done that I should be condemned to such a companionship?"

Happily the sound of the bolts turning prevented my uttering this offensive remark. The door was opened by Schiller, who entered, with two iron porringers in his hand and a loaf of black bread under his arm. Having carefully placed these at the Colonel's feet, he made us a sign to eat.

"What!" said I, descending from the window, "is this our fare? Soup garnished with lumps of tallow,—beans cooked in salt and water! Cold, too!" I added after having tried to taste two or three, and spit them out again. "It would take the stomach of an ostrich to digest such stones."

I spoke to Schiller as if he could understand me. He laughed at my gestures; and taking a long knife from his pocket, he gravely cut the bread in two, giving each of us his moiety; then wishing us a good appetite, he left the cell.

Dinner, our only repast for the day, was before us; but we could not, in spite of all our resolution, conquer the repugnance which the vile odour of these dishes and the filthiness of the porringers caused in us: the meat and the bread remained untouched. Hunger alone forced us afterwards to take some portion of this detestable food, which at once caused us to undergo the tortures of loathing and inanition.

The clocks of the town struck five. Already the day was declining, and a kind of twilight only penetrated into our prison. The Colonel, worn out, lay extended on his mattress, whilst I, from my loophole, enjoyed in silence the last rays of the setting sun. Gradually shade followed shade; all became vague and indistinct before my eyes, and night extended her veil over the scene.

My heart sank within me. I rested my head against the bars of the window, and wept bitterly. "Who will ever take account of my solitary sufferings?" I asked myself in despair. But soon I thought of my mother; and with the remembrance of her, this passage of Scripture she had taught me in childhood came to my mind, "Blessed are they who weep, for they shall be comforted,"—holy words! which restored a calm to my spirits, and determined me to be more resigned.

On coming down from my observatory I tried to walk about; but the room was so dark and narrow, that I was compelled to throw myself, without undressing, on the hard and scanty pallet which formed my bed. The whole night was passed without rest; or if I did for a moment fall into a slumber, I was soon awakened by the challenge which the numerous sentries stationed around us shouted forth every quarter of an hour, as if they had been charged to add to the other miseries of the *carcere duro* that of perpetual sleeplessness.

With my whole body bruised by successive falls from my couch, I at last dropped asleep; but I was soon roused by a clanking of chains, which seemed to proceed from the bowels of the earth. The deep gloom in which we were immured, the shrill prolonged cries of the sentinels, and the sound of harsh voices, indistinct from their multitude, produced such an effect upon my mind, yet in the half-consciousness of dosing, that I fancied myself in hell, amid its torments and cursing. I shuddered with dread; a cold sweat covered my body; every limb seemed paralysed. I broke through this nightmare by a convulsive effort, and in so doing fell upon the floor.

“My dear fellow!” cried the Colonel, who was lying at his ease on the mattress he had been indulged with, “why, this must be the tenth time, at least! are you hurt?”

“Not at all, not at all,” I answered, rising up. “ shall get used to it after awhile.”

I was myself again. I still listened, and, I confess, still shuddered at what I heard. But I had recovered sufficient coolness to recollect that I was within the walls of Spielberg, and that such noises were probably caused by the convicts leaving their prisons for their daily tasks. Some ten minutes might have elapsed after this, when our door was opened, and several jailers entered. Some examined the bars of the window, others the walls, and some looked under the beds. One of them, who carried a lantern, approached the Colonel, and had stretched out his hand to feel the prisoner's legs, when their head man checked him, saying something which made the whole party burst into roars of laughter.

Several hours had still to pass ere the daylight would visit our prison; yet I could not return to rest, though so harassed by previous interruptions. The darkness of night still reigned without, and the solace of the window was precluded. The narrowness of the cell prevented my walking—a dreadful torture, after the constraint I had been compelled to endure for the last twenty days. I had nothing left but to throw myself on my pallet, and to think—alas, what were my thoughts! Without books, without any sort of consolation, I almost repined at the harsh mercy which denied me the quicker pangs of the scaffold.

The door again opening aroused me from my dejection. A convict, who attended to the domestic wants of the prisoners, made his appearance. I raised myself, the better to view this chamberlain of the dungeons, whose form and odd costume I could scarcely distinguish by the dim light of the corridor lamp. I even advanced as far as the door, despite the mephitic exhalation which issued from it, and had nearly passed the threshold, when Schiller, suddenly appearing, cried out "Holla! what is all this?" and with a thrust of his long arm pushed me back into my cell.

About an hour afterwards, just at daybreak, he brought us a porringer. "Here is something good," he cried, handing to us a wooden spoon. The slop consisted of water, in which were floating a few roasted grains of barley. Such was our breakfast. "Pish!" said I to Schiller in German, after tasting this precious stuff, "not good! not good!" Without taking the slightest notice of my words, the imperturbable soldier replied, "Good! good! very nice indeed!" It was so nice that we could not swallow it; and we were left a prey to hunger which became almost insupportable.

The weather was cold and damp; a thick fog covered the country; the eye could distinguish nothing. Yet I still sought my loophole, to find some relief to my depressed spirits. There at least I could breathe freely; there my eyes were not pained by the sight of the horrible walls which surrounded me. Under the window, the whole length of the building, I could hear the measured step of the sentinel marching to and fro. Further off, I caught glimpses of the gleaming bayonets of others. How well it is guarded! thought I; and unconsciously I began to hum that old and touching air, "O Richard, O mon roi! l'univers t'abandonne." A subdued "Bravo!" which none but the ear of a prisoner would have caught, interrupted me. I coughed; the cough was answered. I asked in the lowest whisper who it was beneath me:—judge of my joy when I found it was Borsieri!

"I am with our good friend Castillia," he said in a low voice, "dying with hunger, and exhausted with the attempt last night to keep my place on one of the hardest mattresses that ever fell to the lot of a galley-slave. Castillia says that he shall get used to it; but for my own part, I am sure I shall give up the ghost before a month is over."

I was about to reply, when an authoritative "Silence!" from the sentinel below, and a particularly energetic curse from Schiller, who had entered unnoticed by me, stopped the words upon my tongue. Surprised and confused by this interruption, I almost tumbled down at the feet of this surly jailer, whose features however, despite his ill-temper, belied his angry words. He nevertheless read me a sermon, of which the text was "Silence!" and the moral—the chains hanging on the wall, which he pointed out to me with his finger in a significant and menacing manner.

After having satisfied himself with the impression his remonstrance had made upon us, he turned toward a convict who was waiting on the threshold. At his signal the man entered, bearing in one hand some grey hats of the commonest felt, in the other some cotton stockings. Schiller took the hats, and one by one tried them on the head of the Colonel. "A capital fit—capital!" he cried, gravely forcing the conical machine of felt over the ears of my poor companion, who little relished the vulgar head-dress he was thus forced to wear. His follower, of course, chimed in—"A capital fit!" and I could not help being amused by the strange contrast the wretched hat presented to the elegant braided frock-coat of the Colonel. Our luggage was next carefully spread out upon our beds; then the convict drew from his pocket a pair of scissors and a long strip of paper to take our measures; in performing which operation he often interrupted himself to display complacently his own dress. It consisted of a particoloured jacket, half grey, half brown—and waistcoat and pantaloons, open on each side to admit his chains, one leg grey, the other brown,—a knave-of-clubs sort of uniform, calculated to prevent every chance of escape to its wearer.

"Is it not handsome?" asked the felon, laughing malignantly, as if the livery of crime which he was about to prepare for men of gentle birth, had been to his mind a work of reprisals and vengeance.

Never had a person displaying such low cunning come under my observation. I felt such disgust at being pulled about by the wretch, that I was ready to turn him out of the cell, when Schiller, pressed for time in the distribution of hats to the other prisoners, bade him make haste. We afterwards found that the dilatoriness of the master-tailor had proceeded from his taking our handkerchiefs together with our measures.

CHAPTER II.

In the monotony of a prison the slightest incident will give a turn to the current of the thoughts. The disgust which the presence of the convict had created was succeeded by the liveliest joy, on merely perceiving by his long and flowing locks that I was not to be shorn like a galley-slave of Toulon or Brest. This trifling circumstance sufficed to reanimate my spirits. I beheld my prison-walls without anguish; and when Schiller brought us dinner, I joked him about our filthy and rusty iron porringers, about our table, which compelled us to eat on the floor,—our fingers, which served us instead of knives and forks: I even ate several mouthfuls of a cake, so doughy and stinking, that the Colonel, though he held his nose to preclude its odour, could not swallow it, so much it went against his stomach.

On seeing me so determined, Schiller clapped me on the shoulder, and cried, "Come, you are getting on!" Though his manner was somewhat rude, it showed that the old jailer was not a bad fellow at bottom, and that we might in time interest him to ameliorate our condition. To effect this, however, it would be necessary to talk with him, to make him understand us; but with the little German I then knew, this was impracticable.

"If we had some books," said I to my companion, "it could be very well managed."

"Books!" he answered; "who knows whether we shall ever again have any?"

This melancholy doubt brought before me all the long miseries of inactive captivity, and depressed my spirits. Happily this cruel uncertainty, which would have for ever banished from my heart every buoyant feeling, was soon afterwards dissipated by the words of the Commandant of Spielberg, who at that time began his daily visitations.

He was a man of from forty to forty-five years of age: his appearance and manners had something elegant and unembarrassed about them, seldom observed in Austrian officers, who owe their rank, as he did, to their services, not to their birth. His countenance was open and prepossessing; his address put you at your ease; and the impression which he produced was, that, while strictly fulfilling his duty, he would never act arbitrarily to the unfortunate beings committed to his charge. To us poor captives it was something to be treated even with politeness; and the first words which Captain Schmerschek addressed to us, inquiring after our health and our wants, touched us with their benevolence and called forth our gratitude.

"You are but badly off here, gentlemen," he said; "you will have many privations, many afflictions to go through: existence in Spielberg is insupportable; no one knows that better than I do. Still time as it rolls on brings its little varieties, and he who can survive the first year or two may be assured of beholding his hour of release arrive. Your food is bad, I admit, but I advise you to force yourselves to partake of it: the longer you delay this the weaker will your stomachs become, you will be the more unable to digest it, and will sink with weakness. By the exercise you will have in the open air"—

"What!" I eagerly exclaimed, "shall we then ever go outside our prison?"

"Of course; you will have half an hour's promenade every day: directly your dresses are made, and your irons riveted on, you will be conducted to the platform."

"Irons!" sighed the Colonel in a subdued tone; "I had hoped that the report of the physicians at Milan would have dispensed me from"—

"Right," replied the Commandant, smiling; "you are here under favourable auspices; the bed which has been granted to you is a proof of it."

My eyes turned towards my companion; he blushed involuntarily.

"And when shall I be dressed and fettered?" I inquired of the Commandant.

"Probably tomorrow: all our workmen are occupied about you; I have desired them to give you the best cloth they have; and for the irons, they shall be less unwieldy and straitened than those you have worn hitherto, and which we sent back yesterday to the Commissaries at Milan."

"Your kindness," I rejoined, "emboldens me to ask a further favour."

"What may that be speak freely."

"Might we be allowed some of our books?"

He reflected a moment, and then said, "It is a difficult affair to manage. However, his Excellency the Governor has allowed them to the prisoners from Venice, and I do not see why— at all events I will ask him."

"But could you not take upon yourself the responsibility of permitting us to have them today?"

"Today—no, not today," he answered with hesitation, "but probably tomorrow; I shall see his Excellency this evening. Here, Krall! Krall!"

At this summons a little guard scarcely five feet high, and whom we had not seen before, appeared. Cap in hand he received respectfully the instructions of his superior. A few seconds elapsed and the Commandant left us, saying as he went, "This is the man to whom the books are confided, and who will be authorized to deliver them to you; but you will only be allowed two at a time."

We thanked him again and again, and for a moment remained in company with Krall, who took the opportunity of saying to us in Italian, "I am most happy, gentlemen, to serve you; tomorrow you will inform me of the books you wish for, and I will supply them to you." We were astonished both at the purity of his accent, and the ease with which he expressed himself in Italian.

The next day, true to his promise, Krall came to inquire what books we desired. "But how will you be able to pick them out?" I observed dubiously.

Our librarian drew himself up. "As if, after two years' practice among the gentlemen here, I did not know my duty! English, French, Italian,—you have only to tell me, and it shall not be my fault if you have not the works, take my word for it."

"Well," said I, "bring me the first volume of Shakspere, and another of Chateaubriand."

"Yes, sir."

In a few minutes he returned, bearing triumphantly the books we had asked for.

"Was I not right? eh, eh! you see I know how to read: I have learned the languages. I can speak French a little; think of that! It is a great advantage to a man. I shall come to English next."

"Who would ever have suspected," I remarked to the Colonel when we were alone, "that there existed any intellect in that cat's head, with its flattened visage and deformed cranium? Did you observe how intelligent his countenance became, despite the wandering glances of the eyes, whenever the little man talked and smiled? Rely upon it there is much talent hidden under that pitiful outside, ay, and what is more, a warm heart too, I will answer for it."

The sequel proved that I had judged rightly.

The third day after this, Krall said to us, "You will have your dresses in a quarter of an hour: the smith will come and put on your chains, and then we can take a walk." In a few minutes our degrading uniform was brought us by Schiller. We stripped off our own clothes, and in so doing we felt as if renouncing for ever the enjoyments of the world and liberty. Our particoloured dress consisted of the coarsest cloth; cotton stockings, equally coarse, covered our feet; and heavy boots, greased with fat and clouted with hobnails, completed our attire. Linen, cravats, handkerchiefs, all were taken from us: we possessed not a single relic of our former condition.

"What!" inquired I of poor Krall, whom Schiller had called to act as interpreter, and who was looking on compassionately, "what! is this wretched strip of cloth to serve as a cravat? better give me a rope at once! Am I not even to be allowed a handkerchief?"

"It is contrary to our rules," replied Krall. "Sirs, will you walk to the place where the smith is awaiting you?"

I had already passed the door of the prison, followed by my companion, when Schiller stopped him, saying, "'T is not your turn yet." The Colonel therefore remained in the cell, whilst I soon came to a room which echoed with the blows of the hammer. The smith wished me good morning in French, showed me the chain, which was heavy and long; then, whilst Krall held my leg, he fastened the rivets. In a quarter of an hour the operation was finished.

How many years, I thought to myself, will pass before these irons so strongly riveted will be removed! God alone knows the future; we are in his hands. It is for Him to will—for us to bear patiently his decrees!

I had got up, and attempted to walk a few paces. Krall remarked that I moved much easier in these fetters than in my former ones.

"They are longer," I replied; "but if they continue to batter my ankle-bones thus, in less than two hours there will be no skin left upon them."

"To obviate that, every prisoner is supplied with these leather straps. They are fastened to the knees, and the iron anklets of the fetters are tied up to them, so as to prevent their falling on the bone."

So saying, Krall affixed to my person these last insignia of a convict, after which he resumed:

"Now then, try again; you will find them much less painful, and before long they will be easy enough."

I certainly did feel much more at my ease; but many days elapsed ere I could walk without stumbling grievously against the sharp edges of my anklets, or that my ear became accustomed to the clinking produced by my slightest movement.

At ten o'clock the next morning Krall came to escort us to the promenade. The weather was fine. "Do you not intend to come with us?" he asked my companion.

"No, the air is too chill as yet for my rheumatism."

"Well, you can do as you like. *You* will come of course?" he inquired, turning to me: "I will show the way."

We advanced along the opposite length of the corridor to that I had traversed on the day of my arrival. Every now and then we passed cells, from which proceeded a noise of voices and clattering of chains. I lingered an instant at one of them; but my guard turned round immediately, saying, "Come, sir, come!"

At the end of the corridor we ascended two or three steps, and stood upon the platform. Krall, who walked before me, shouldering his musket, then exclaimed, "Here we are; is it not a beautiful view? Advance nearer the wall; this must do your eyes good after the gloom of your cell."

Resting upon the parapet, which was only breast-high, I gazed in silence on the vast panorama, of which I had gained a glimpse from the window of my dungeon.

"That village on the left at the foot of the mountains," said Krall as he stood by me, "is Obrovitz. The road which passes through it, and is lost among the mountains, leads to Bohemia, my own dear country. Carrying your eye along the base of the hills, on the banks of the river, nearly opposite, you perceive Augarten, a great place of resort for the gentry about here. Further on to the right are the walls of the town, and the gate called the Fröhliche Thüre. You may observe the people going in to walk upon the lawn of the Governor's palace, just before you. That large building close to the residence of his Excellency is the church of Saint Jerome, where I attend mass every Sunday. A little more to the right, you see Brünn. What noble steeples they have there, sir! there is nothing like them—not even in Paris."

"Were you ever in Paris?" I asked with surprise.

"Oh yes, sir," he answered, showing me with pride a medal which he wore suspended round his neck by a black and yellow ribbon. "All those who went through the French campaign received this decoration. I was in a regiment of chasseurs."

In uttering these words Krall drew himself up, and I could hardly help smiling at the puny stature and crooked legs of this redoutable warrior; but the recollection of the foreign invasion gave a different turn to my feelings. After a few moments' silence I inquired, "Where does that road lead to?"

"This one," he replied, "running northerly, is the road to Olmütz; further on, by the side of the road, the plain which extends as far as we can see is the field of Austerlitz."

"What do you call this open space which stretches from the town ramparts to the bastions of Spielberg?"

"The parade, sir, where the reviews are held; and yon large walled inclosure, planted with trees, at the extremity of the suburbs, is the burial-ground," he added, crossing himself.

"Are the convicts buried there?"

"Yes, sir, they are."

The thought that this probably might be my own last resting-place fell heavily upon my mind. Krall saw that I was dispirited, and to change my train of thought he said, leaning upon the parapet, "Yon low quadrangular house to the left, where an artilleryman stands sentry, is the magazine from which 't is said the French took the powder they used to blow up the fortifications of Spielberg in 1809."

I bent forward to look at the celebrated magazine, but my glances soon wandered from it to scrutinize the bastion, of which my position gave me a full view. There were three grenadiers as a watch over our prison; lower down on the next fortification three others were stationed; every further entrenchment was similarly guarded. This at once dissipated the hopes of flight which I had already begun to form in my mind. On that side, at all events, it was impossible.

Our platform, which I next attentively examined, was about ten feet long by eight broad. Like the prison we occupied, it was situated due north, and almost entirely surrounded by the chapel, and by walls so high, that for six months in the year not a ray of the sun could ever reach it. Its aspect was dismal, its atmosphere bleak; save two or three rose-trees crawling over the walls, there was not the least trace of vegetation.

"Do these ever blow?" I asked of Krall, pointing to the sorry shrubs, on which not a bud gave any indication of spring.

"Oh dear, yes! the roses are splendid, as you will see during the summer. There are some wallflowers too, in pots in my room. When the season is a little more advanced, I will put them out here, and in flowering time, when you come out of your prison, their fragrance will revive you."

"Is that the way to the church?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do the prisoners attend to hear mass every Sunday?"

"The convicts never omit it."

"And the Italians?"

Krall coloured up, and was silent: his instructions were to say nothing upon this point. I saw that it would be ill-advised to attack the passive obedience of a man who had grown up in the conviction that every order from a superior is a mandate from heaven, from which there is no appeal.

We talked some time longer, walking backwards and forwards, along the platform, until the chapel clock, sounding the half-hour, announced that the period for ending my exercise was arrived. I slowly returned to the Colonel, regretting that I was obliged to change the beautiful clear sky for our dark dwelling; but I returned with the consolation of having discovered in one of our guards a kind spirit of compassion, that might perhaps mitigate the miseries of our captivity.

CHAPTER III.

BEING now assured of the enjoyment of my books, I felt more courage to support the evils of the present and to brave the uncertainty of the future. After some consideration, I arranged my day thus: the morning I devoted to languages and poetry, the noon to philosophy and history; and as twilight approached, I mounted to my window, to gaze upon the country around, and to watch the lights as they gleamed one by one from the habitations in the suburbs,—a luxury excluded from my dungeon.

I imposed upon myself a long but useful task, being determined to strengthen my spirit, and by resolution to rise superior to the miseries of my captivity. Sustained by this, and the hopes of a studious and profitable future, I gradually familiarized myself to my prison, to the hardness of my couch, the weight of my chains, and the constraint of my coarse garments. I acquired, what Rinaldini wisely called the happiness of life, methodical habits; and I soon began to create an existence for myself, which, in spite of all my bodily privations and sufferings, was more tolerable than that of Milan, because the inquietude of the trial and the torments of expectation no longer disturbed my tranquillity.

The days glided on without trouble or apprehension: I should almost have found a sort of felicity in this silence of the tomb, but for the remembrance of my family, and my regret at being separated from Confalonieri, whose unknown fate caused me much anxiety.

In a short time I became thoroughly acquainted with all that was passing around me. I observed everything, animate or inanimate, from the Commandant of Spielberg, who every day paid us a visit, to the two convicts who attended to the needs of our dungeon. One of these, young, limber, active, with a roguish leer and a countenance the epitome of rascality, seemed to laugh at his destiny. The other, advanced in years, though still robust, bore upon his open features the impress of long and patient suffering. The former was a Pole, the latter a Bohemian. What crimes they had committed I was never told; but I should have been much disappointed had I learned that the old man, so patient and humble, had been guilty of any villanous action. As to the younger, his physiognomy told its tale; and when he smiled at me with an air of familiarity, I felt such disgust, that I either closed my eyes or turned away my head.

His amicable advances did not however cease, and I soon began to think there must be some meaning in his signs, as he repeated them more expressively when the jailers happened not to be watching him. I at first feigned not to understand him, but still he persisted. What could he want of me? I tried in vain to divine. At last, one day, he drew from his pocket a little packet, very dirty and much worn. This he adroitly placed under our jug as he filled it, indicating by a side glance of his eye, as he departed, the treasure which he had confided to my honour.

The door closed,—I hurried to gain the packet: it contained a vial of reddish liquid, the stump of a pen, and a letter worded nearly as follows:

"We are ignorant of your names; but your misfortunes and oursare the same, and on this ground we address you. Let us know who you are: tell us about Milan, about Italy, about everything. During the two years that we have been here no news has reached us. Write without fear; we vouch for the messenger. Reply quickly, for we burn to hear by what fatal destiny you, like us, have been buried in the tombs of Spielberg.

"SILVIO PELLICO.
"PIERO MARONCELLI."

"'Tis from Pellico!" I exclaimed to the Colonel; "hear what he says." He heard it through, but was far from expressing the emotion and joy which I felt at this generous appeal from a man of whom Confalonieri had spoken with great esteem and warmth. This unforeseen, unhoped-for correspondence, thus established between us, was a happy event, from which I promised myself the most effectual consolation. When I took up my pen to answer him, I felt as if I were writing to an old friend whom Heaven had restored to me after I had long mourned his loss.

I carefully folded up my letter, and held it in readiness at the time the convict came to bring us fresh water, when I intended, despite my disgust at the rascal, to slip it into his hand. But the jailers were too vigilant, and I hesitated—I was on thorns. After having in vain attempted to give the secret despatch into my messenger's hand, I adopted the plan of concealing it under the jug, which he regularly filled every morning. What a weight was taken from my mind when I saw him expertly snatch up my letter, and convey it into his pocket, with all the dexterity of an experienced juggler! He then turned round upon me with a significant look of triumph, opening his mouth from one ear to the other, and half closing his eyes, the whole forming a smile something between that of a satyr and a demon, and fully justifying the name of Caliban which we afterwards gave him.

Delivered from the anxiety which this first essay in our clandestine correspondence had caused me, I soon fell into a still greater fear that this fellow might deliver my letter to the Commandant of Spielberg. Happily a speedy reply from Pellico released me in a short time from this inquietude. That excellent man, touched with my sad fate, and the frankness with which I had opened my heart to him, expressed in French how much he felt for me. "God," he said, "will recompense you for all your devotedness and resignation. Put your confidence in Him! You will again see your country and your family, for you are yet young, and political sentences, though for life, are not always perpetual. Would to Heaven that I had the same hopes for Confalonieri! Who would have told me, four years ago, when we were travelling together for the promotion of the cause of Italy, that we should one day both groan in the same prison? Oh that Providence would restore to his weeping wife, to his friends, to his country, that good man, whose misfortunes it would be truly a happiness to me to alleviate!"

This letter, which displayed the feeling and devoted disposition of Pellico, was terminated by some information respecting the character of the jailers, our companions in captivity, and the dungeons they occupied. By this I learned that the last cell to the left, on the way to the platform, was his, and that he could hear my voice when I walked there. I soon, to my lively satisfaction, convinced myself that the few French words which I pronounced at intervals, while taking my exercise, reached their ears. A slight cough, or a snatch of a song hummed by his companion Maroncelli, showed that they had recognised me. I would then approach the parapet, and whistle low and softly a little French air, of which the burden was, "My heart is with you!" Such was the commencement of a mysterious intercourse, a tender friendship, which proved the source of inexpressible consolation to me.

One day I heard the door of the staircase open, and many persons pass in silence along the corridor. I wondered if it was Confalonieri. I listened, but nothing occurred without to confirm this hope.

The next morning, while taking my walk, I interrogated Krall, but without success. Though he was growing more and more communicative, an imperturbable "I do not know" cut short all my questions.

"Ah, very well," I said, "I see I must have deceived myself; but as you will tell me nothing about the living, perhaps you will of the dead,—of that famous Baron Trenck, whose history you must know, or some other prisoner of state who has been confined at Spielberg before us.

The little man, whose weak side was an inordinate idea of his own erudition, drew himself up, and replied with a very wise and self-satisfied smile, "That would be rather too long to get through in one day."

"Well, but we are not so much pushed for time as all that. Begin it today, tomorrow continue it, next day the same, and so on. But before we begin, tell me how comes it that I find a man like you, with elevated sentiments, so warm a heart, and with such aptitude for study, filling the situation of a guard of convicts?"

Krall blushed, and stammered out, "Alas! my dear sir, it is not from choice, as you may readily believe." After a few seconds' pause he continued:—

"In 1813, you are aware, there was a great demand for soldiers for the Allied armies; no one was exempt. My mother—she was a widow then, poor old soul!—seeing me in my infancy so weak and little, had sent me to school. 'Who knows?' said she; 'God has denied him bodily strength, maybe he will make it up by the gift of learning. Mind then that you are always dutiful to your master,' she repeated to me every evening; 'be always submissive to him, as Samuel was to the high-priest Eli, so that, like his blessed mother, I may every year thank the Lord on your birthday for having given me a good son.'

"The whole of my days was passed either at school or in the church. I soon learned to read, write, and cipher; I became the cleverest boy in the choir; and the master, who had recommended me to the curate to be taught Latin, said to my good mother, 'That lad will take my place one of these days:' then he would add, 'What a pity that he is so small! we might, by the aid of the curate, have made him a priest.'

"My poor mother wept with joy, sir, at this, and replied, 'In time he will get bigger and stronger; leave him in God's hands.' My father, good man, was of another way of thinking. A tailor by business, it was one of his sayings, that as long as one has a trade, one has bread at the fingers' ends; that the master and the curate might die some time or other and I might succeed them, but in the meanwhile I should learn to make the clothes I was to wear. 'Besides,' he always said to my mother, 'he seems to be made for the business. Look at his legs; did you ever see any one but a tailor with legs like those?' The poor woman sighed, and I sighed too; but in Bohemia, when a father says a thing one must be silent and do it.

"My apprenticeship began: all day long, week after week, I plied my needle. It was very irksome, and I should have lost courage had not my mother said, embracing me, 'God will reward you for your submission, my son: work on—one is always happy when pious and honest.' I was consoled, and my heart beat with satisfaction when, in the hours after business, I read the good books which my master lent me or my mother bought out of her savings. Ah, poor woman! how many a privation did she impose on herself to accomplish that.

"I grew up: by dint of sitting cross-legged and sewing seams, I had managed to pick up enough of my business to satisfy my father, whose little trade prospered: we were all happy, and we thanked God. One day my mother, who was always thinking of the future, said to me, 'Ernst, my brave boy, you must get a wife some one of these days: have you made a choice yet?'

"'Yes, mother,' I answered, blushing, 'if the daughter of our neighbour Karl'—

"'Hanna!' she exclaimed with joy; 'God be praised, my child, the very person I thought of! she is religious, modest, discreet, a good housewife, and she respects her parents. Go, Ernst! thy marriage will be thy happiness and mine.'

"From that day everything went on still better at our house. Each night we assembled together and played on some instrument or sung psalms. Hanna had a sweet voice—oh, such a voice! In Bohemia, sir—in all the German villages—everybody is a musician, young as well as old; each plays two or three instruments. Oh, what happy hours were those! But the joys of the world are of no longer duration than the flowers of the field, as our curate used to impress upon us.

"My father died, and the war came. Though I was my mother's sole support, I was compelled to serve. My mother and Hanna wept,—their tears went to my heart. They entreated, supplicated the bailiff to let me off, but it was in vain.

"'They require so many men,' he said, 'that I can't help myself; it is a general levy, nobody is exempt.' There was no remedy: I was obliged to leave my mother and Hanna, and go to the war, from which but very few returned.

"My mother gave me her blessing, and away I went, miserable enough, you may suppose. When I came to the turn in the mountain-road where I last saw our village my heart nearly failed me. I was on the point of running back at all hazards, when the order of the corporal of recruits, 'Forward there, conscript!' made me proceed.

"Eight days afterwards we arrived at the depôt, where we were kept at drill incessantly. It was hard enough at first, but I was sensitive, and would have died rather than excite the mockery of my comrades. In a few months we were ready to march. There had been so much said about our being called forth to deliver our country from a third irruption of Napoleon's armies, that we longed to be led to the field. We felt it to be a national war: the proclamations of our Emperor called upon every one to save the independence of our country. When we departed for the campaign of Dresden it was wonderful to see how resolved we all were.

"Our battalion of chasseurs distinguished themselves much: we left a great many behind us; but thanks to God and my poor mother's prayers, I escaped all dangers and all fatigues, though Heaven knows what we suffered. Several times in the French campaign I was nearly dying with hunger and cold. Once in particular—but that will be too long a story to tell now, for the time is nearly up. In a word, as I said, my good sir, I got out of all scrapes, while many stronger and bigger fellows lost their lives in them. I have seen France, and carried my body out of it on my own legs.

"On my return to Austria I obtained a furlough from my Colonel and visited our village. My poor mother and Hanna, to whom I had written, came to meet me. How old my mother had become! she was poor too, very poor. Hanna also had suffered much.

"I did all I could to obtain my discharge, but failed. I left my mother and Hanna once more, with the consolation of being more beloved by them than ever, and the hope of returning ere long and settling. I deprived myself of everything I could to aid them, but our pay was so trifling that with all my economy I could do but little. At last my Colonel, who took an interest in me, said, 'Ernst, as you are striving to put something by, I will draft you into Spielberg to serve the remainder of your time if you will: your pay there will be twenty sous a day.'

"At the name of Spielberg the blood mounted to my face, and I refused. The thought of my mother at last conquered my repugnance: her welfare was to be cared for before all. I accepted the offer; I came here; and each month I am laying by something. But it cost me a hard struggle to submit to this ignoble duty; and I should soon have quitted it, you may be sure, and returned to my battalion, had they not posted me over the Italian prisoners. I have thanked Providence for this favour, since I am thus enabled to assist my aged mother, to lay up a trifle against my marriage with Hanna, and to afford some alleviation to unfortunate prisoners like yourself."

CHAPTER IV.

A SUDDEN signal to retire prevented my expressing to Krall the interest his touching and simple narrative had excited. But my looks at parting must have convinced him that the painful constraint I at first felt, at being closely followed by a guard during my walk, had by his kindness been converted into a feeling of pleasure in his society.

Every day I awaited impatiently the time of going on the platform. If my good Krall appeared, I felt so delighted as to brave the severest cold; but when another guard came to fetch me, I imitated my companion, and declined going out. Like all Austrian soldiers, Krall had, in the service, contracted habits of passive obedience; nevertheless, he was not a man to execute mechanically, and to the letter, the rigorous orders that had been issued respecting the state-prisoners. His mind was too much above his condition, to allow him to submit long to the mere wretched office of a spy.

As soon as he was brought into contact with the prisoners of state, Krall felt at once pity and sympathy for their fate. They had been described to him as great criminals; but their good conduct appeared to him to give the lie completely to the odious character in which the Austrian Government had represented them to the credulous multitude. By daily intercourse between the guard and his prisoners, Krall had acquired such a thirst for knowledge, that, if he had had more leisure, he would probably have attained some intellectual distinction.

He first applied himself to the study of the language of those among whom he had now been called to live, and in a short time he was a tolerable Italian scholar. By conversing with his prisoners, and reading their books, he derived ideas and feelings, such as no one could have expected to find in a guard of convicts. So excellent a disposition could not fail to unfold itself, and to produce good fruits; and my surprise, as well as my consolation, may easily be imagined at finding, on my arrival at Spielberg, a man of intelligence and sensibility in the soldier appointed to watch us during our walk. My intercourse with him became daily more intimate, and I can say with truth, that I often found myself more patient and resigned after these interviews, in which the simple and kind-hearted Krall did more than my own reason or imagination to induce me to hope.

It was agreed between us that I should teach him French, and that in return he should teach me to read and pronounce German. "Our Emperor," he would say, whilst making me repeat grammatical phrases, "is too good not to set you at liberty some day. Study diligently then, if you would know our language before you return to your own country."

I did study, and so assiduously, that the stretch of mind, added to want of nourishment, brought on fits of fainting and weakness, against which courage and will struggled in vain.

"You suffer, I see," said the good Krall to me one day gently. "Young and robust as you are, you have more need than any other to be kept up, especially during these first months. Your food is so bad: if I dared—" and he half drew out of his pocket a piece of household bread and some walnuts.

"Thanks, my dear Krall; I want nothing; I shall get used to—"

"Alas! dear sir, this is all I have," he repeated, holding out the bread, the good quality and the sight of which excited my appetite. "Take it, I entreat you; it will do you good."

"No, no," I replied with emotion; "I will not rob you of it; our rations suffice for me."

"It is impossible!" cried poor Krall, vexed at my refusal. "Do you think I am made of stone, and that I can see a poor fellow like you suffering, without desiring to help him? Be assured, our Emperor does not know that you have to endure hunger. Take what I offer, —do take it. You cannot think the pain it would give me to see you end your days like that unfortunate Italian who arrived at Spielberg so strong and in such health."

Seeing that I persisted, he added, "And what would have become of me in the French campaign if I had not met with kindness? Alone, near Langres in Champagne, I lost my way. Night came on, and I continued to walk; but fatigue, cold and hunger soon reduced me to extreme weakness and despair, and I was on the point of sitting down to perish, when I perceived a glimmering light in the distance. My courage revived, and I dragged myself towards the spot from which it seemed to come. My limbs were stiff and frozen, and I was twenty times on the point of giving up. At last I arrived at a cottage. I knocked, and fell senseless on the threshold. When I recovered I found myself before a good fire, wrapped up in a blanket. A woman of the same age as my mother was watching by my side. Although I was an enemy's soldier, she had taken pity on my youth; she had warmed me, treated me as her own son; and when I was quite restored, and my hunger appeased, the poor old woman, as I took my leave, pressed me to take with me bread and bacon. Well, sir, have I not a debt of gratitude to discharge in behalf of those who suffer? and is it not a happiness to me, when I recollect the kindness of that good woman, to think that I am able to assist one of her countrymen? No, no, you cannot refuse me now."

Saying this, Krall pressed upon me his charitable offering. I accepted it; my eyes filled with tears, and I called down a blessing upon him. "Sit down, sit down," said he joyfully, leading me towards a wooden bench placed against the chapel wall; "eat at your leisure; I will stand before you, and you will not be seen."

"Are you fearful," I inquired, "of being watched and informed against by your comrades—by old Schiller?"

"Not by him, but by the others. If Schiller is blunt and surly, he has a heart. He is a queer fellow, a merry-andrew, who tells stories that would make you laugh in a churchyard. When he has been drinking, especially, his old tales of the times of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. come into his head, and every one listens to him because he is a cunning knave; and he pays moreover for the drink,—to say nothing of his generosity and friendship to such of his comrades as are in need. His is a well-lined purse; his brother, the Colonel, takes care to fill it."

"How! his brother a Colonel?"

"Yes, sir; he commands a Scotch regiment in England; but Schiller is not the prouder for all that. Would you believe that he has refused to be an officer? He might have been made one twenty times; but the queer old chap always said, 'I have just capacity enough for a recruiting serjeant: beyond that, no—I should be an ass!' Is he not odd, the old fellow, with his modesty?" continued Krall, delighted to see me eat with increasing appetite. "Come, now you are better, let us walk a little; we shall not read German today."

"I have more strength than when I came out on the platform," said I rising. "Thanks, good Krall, thanks; but only this once; do you understand?"

"Let us not talk of that, sir; that is my business. Will not our Lord say on the judgement-day, 'Come, you who helped the prisoner, the kingdom of Heaven is yours'? Look," added he, directing my attention to the fortifications of the town; "that yonder was once called the Students' Bastion. Do you know the reason? Because in the Thirty Years' War, when the

Swedes besieged Brünn, the collegians asked permission to defend that side of the town, and fought so well, that they repelled all the enemy's attacks: from that time, out of gratitude, the name of the Students' Bastion was given to that part of the rampart. I read this in an old book, as well as many other things relating to my country, Bohemia, in which there was much fighting in those days. Spielberg was a citadel then,—and what a citadel! There were no convicts in it. They say it has always contained state-prisoners, men of consequence, who were confined there on the other side of the building, in the prison since occupied by officers placed under arrest. In the time of Joseph I. Spielberg was full of Hungarian nobles, of whom no one knew the names, and who, when once they had entered, never again beheld the light of day. Under Maria Theresa, how many others have been incarcerated here! If there had only been that terrible Colonel of Pandours, Baron Trenck, whose dungeon was almost under yours—"

"Under mine!" said I, with great curiosity.

"Yes, sir; there he was shut up. What a history!"

"Tell it me, I beg."

"A long time ago," he began mysteriously, "there arrived one evening at Spielberg a covered waggon, out of which came a large man loaded with irons. He was more than six feet high, with a dark face, covered with scars, and as frightful as that of Beelzebub. The guards, on first perceiving him, crossed themselves; and well they might, as you will see; for this reprobate, strong as he was, must have had converse with the devil, to have been able to snap like glass the chains with which he was loaded when shut up in his dungeon, and to have seduced—but no, that comes after.

"For some days he was so furious that no one dared to enter his prison, in which nothing was heard but imprecations, blasphemy, and howling as if of wild beasts. His large eyes, sparkling like firebrands, made the boldest of his guards tremble. One, more daring than the others, having approached nearer to this imp of Satan, was strangled by him as nimbly as a cat strangles a mouse. And yet, notwithstanding his wickedness, and the terror he occasioned, a few months had hardly passed away, before all the keepers swore by the Colonel of Pandours, who had assuredly thrown a spell over them, as well as on a poor innocent girl whose father was the purveyor. This young girl, they say, was handsome. How, then, should such a monster have seduced her, if he had not employed the aid of sorcery? It happened that one fine day, with the assistance of one of the jailers and the unfortunate girl, (who afterwards died for her pains,) the Colonel had nearly escaped, when all was discovered. They then threw him into the deepest dungeon under the casemates, loaded with irons from head to foot, and more strictly watched than ever. For several days he did nothing but howl, and utter curses against Maria Theresa; then followed a sullen silence, which he only interrupted to blaspheme God, or to repeat the name of Satan in a hoarse and terrible voice.

"He had been there some months, when one night a frightful noise of chains, howlings, and strange shrill cries was heard in his cell. No one moved to see what was going on in the den of this wild beast; but in the morning the keepers, on opening his prison-door, perceived a smell of sulphur, and found the Colonel stretched dead on the ground. His irons, which three men could not have lifted, were broken, his limbs contorted, and his whole body turned black, especially round his neck, where the guards saw with horror the marks of claws. His eyes protruded from their sockets, and his hands, they declare, were fearfully burnt, as if he had seized hold of a bar of red-hot iron,—proofs these, say the old men of Spielberg, that he had struggled with the spirit of darkness in person, to whom he had sold his soul, and who, tired of waiting, had come to fetch his prey.

"Some have pretended that he poisoned himself; but this is not true, sir; he was one on whom the curse of God had fallen. His body was buried like that of a dog, and his soul returns in the form of a black hare whenever any great scoundrel is about to die at Spielberg. In the same manner, that of the young girl, whom his wickedness destroyed, appears under the semblance of a white hare when any good man expires."

"Then the apparition of the white hare must be a rare event," said I smiling.

"So rare, sir, that I have never seen it more than once, when I perceived it there, at the foot of the bastion. It was on the evening of the death of the Italian prisoner Oroboni, whom I nursed. I was leaning on the little window to get a breath of air, and as I looked out, the white hare ran past, towards yonder spot. My God! thought I, turning to the poor dying man, in a few hours this gentle sufferer will have ceased to exist.

His companion said to me, weeping, 'Alas, the pangs of death are upon him: let us pray!' Ah, sir, Oroboni was an angel,—and how resigned! how he wept when he thought of his father, and longed for the old man's blessing! I can never forget his end, or his last words,—they were those of a saint. Poor soul! the bad food killed him, for he also was young and strong."

We were interrupted by a continued knocking at the door of the platform. It was old Schiller, who came grumbling to remind his underling that we had staid twenty minutes beyond the allotted time. I thanked Krall, and returned to my dungeon, where I meditated long, and with gratitude, on the unexpected consolation Providence had reserved for me in the company of this charitable and intelligent guard. For some time, also, before I took up my Shakspere, my mind continued to dwell on the terrible Colonel of Pandours. The tortures which that man, accustomed to command, must have endured within those very walls—that young misled girl, who had died on his account—the story of the hares—strange inventions of a superstitious belief which is found in all ages and all nations,—these thoughts took so strong a hold on my imagination, that, yielding to their influence, I climbed up to the small window of my cell, to look again on the spot where Krall pretended he had seen the white-furred animal; and I repeated with Hamlet,

> "There are more things in heaven and earth
> Than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

From the foot of the bastion, on which my eyes rested for a few minutes, they wandered to the burial-ground, which seemed placed there as if to whisper to the unfortunate prisoner, 'Renounce the world, for I am thy last and only refuge!' The preceding evening I had seen the body of a condemned wretch, who had died the night before, dragged there into an ignoble grave; and I had said to myself, shuddering with horror and disgust, "Such, nevertheless, are the funeral rites that await me if I die at Spielberg! The tatters of a convict for a shroud; two robbers and a jailer for mourners; a common tomb, into which my body will be thrown, without a priest to bless the earth that shall receive it, without a single prayer being offered up for the repose of my soul!" Last scene of a life of desolation and misery,—repulsive images of abandonment and reprobation, of which the overwhelming impressions, instead of being weakened by habit and resignation, assume, each time that the death-cart appears, a new and more melancholy power over the mind!

At this moment I was assailed afresh by these gloomy forebodings, at the view of the funeral procession of a rich man, which had just passed the gates of the town. As my eye followed its slow and solemn march, I involuntarily exclaimed, "Relatives and friends accompany the dead man to his last habitation! torches gleam round his hearse, the tears of many mourners fall upon his grave! and I—I shall be more alone, more forsaken, than the beggar, followed at least by his faithful dog. Unlamented I shall die, and the spot where my body shall be thrown will be unmarked, unremembered.

Gracious Heaven!—is it thus I am to return to the earth?"

The procession at last reached the walls of the cemetery. It entered; the music ceased, the torches were extinguished one by one, and in the darkness and silence which followed I said to myself, "It is night—a long night alike in the mausoleum of the rich and in the neglected grave of the poor felon! And when they shall be awakened from their sleep, what will remain of these two creatures, whose lives and death were here so dissimilar? Nothing but their works. And which will be the rich man then?" A voice answered from the depths of my soul, "He who shall have suffered most for the love of God."

CHAPTER V.

A FEW words, whispered in the evening from one window to another by the prisoners, and other more certain indications, convinced me at last that Confalonieri was arrived at Spielberg, that his cell was on the same range as my own, that he was alone and ill! From that moment I had but one wish,—to be with him, to tend upon him, to alleviate his sufferings. The society of my companion became each day more tedious to me, and I had resolved to try every means to obtain a separation. But what was my hope, my joy, when the Commandant of Spielberg entering one morning said to us, " I regret, gentlemen, to be obliged to separate you, but I have received his Majesty's order to this effect. Each of you is to have another companion: the Colonel will remain here; and you," added he, turning to me, "have the goodness to follow me."

In a few moments, and no doubt to our mutual satisfaction, we took leave of each other, and in another minute I was in the arms of Confalonieri, who, although still feeble and in pain, was better than I had hoped to find him.

" Here you are, then!" cried I, pressing him to my heart; "how different will my prison be now! with what courage and patience shall I endure its hardships! I cannot say I have any affection for the Emperor, but I almost feel grateful to him for having reunited us."

"Ah!" replied the Count, touched by my joy, "provided that our reunion is not a proof that you will share my melancholy fate; for so long as the Emperor lives, there is no chance of my leaving Spielberg."

"It is possible that a fortunate escape, or some political event—Come, let us enjoy the consolation of the present moment, and for the future God will provide.—But you too are shackled, and sleep on straw, although so ill; and I have not yet asked you if your painful attacks are frequent. Forgive this momentary forgetfulness in the joyous excitement our meeting produced; and pray tell me, what is the state of your health?"

"I am better, my friend; and, the attacks have been less frequent and violent, especially since my arrival at Spielberg."

"Heaven be praised!" I exclaimed; "I shall consider this unexpected convalescence as a good omen. The distance between our captivity and our deliverance is not so great as between your illness two months ago and your present return to life and health."

Confalonieri smiled, and appeared happy at seeing me thus hopeful for the future.

"The diet of Spielberg," I continued, "is but ill calculated to recall from the grave those who are about to enter it, unless hunger is more efficacious for certain illnesses than physicians and their remedies. If this is your case, my friend, I am reconciled to the fasting and cravings I have to endure. But you—how have you sustained yourself till now?"

He showed me a few bad prunes the physician had ordered him, instead of the common rations, and some coffee which the Emperor had permitted by special favour, because it was indispensable to his health. But what coffee! it was nothing more than coloured water.

We then communicated to each other all we had learned or observed since our arrival at Spielberg, as to our poor companions, the authorities, and the keepers. He, like myself, had received by means of Caliban a letter from Pellico, and we rejoiced at being able to carry on an occasional intercourse with that good and kind man, a few lines from whom were sufficient to reveal his candid and pious mind. After we had conversed awhile on our mysterious dwelling, which we compared to the celebrated quarries of Dionysius the tyrant, he thus related his journey to Vienna.

"I will not dwell upon the sadness and dejection into which I fell after our separation at Villach. In losing my companions, it seemed to me that the last thread that held me to life was broken, and that there was nothing between Heaven and me but the struggles of death and the tomb. My sufferings increased, and my dissolution seemed so near at hand, that my guards hesitated some time before they conveyed me from the inn at which you left me to a house belonging to the Government. There I was placed under the care of a brave Captain of infantry, who setting an example of humanity to his men, they all vied with one another in showing kindness and attention to the poor prisoner. These proofs of interest went to my heart; they were so spontaneous, so unexpected, that I was affected to tears. To them I owe the first and only moments of respite and tranquillity that I have enjoyed since my arrest. When my fever was subdued, the worthy Captain, seeking every means by which to relieve the dullness of my prison, brought me all the Italian and French books, I believe, that were to be had in the town; and the satisfaction that arises from a good action was depicted on his honest countenance every time he came to me with a fresh stock. Imagining that I must desire to learn what was passing in Italy, he lent me the *Gazzetta di Milano*, the only foreign newspaper permitted at Villach; but it was at my reiterated request alone that he showed me the Number containing the Act of Accusation against us, together with our sentence. 'Read,' said he, 'if you think it may be useful to your health; it is only on this account that I have yielded to your entreaties.'

"I was scarcely convalescent, when a Chief Commissary of Police, sent expressly by the Minister, came to conduct me to Vienna. He told me that my departure depended entirely on the state of my health, and that it was for me to fix the day and the hour. I answered that I was ready; and the next morning, after having thanked my good Captain and his men again and again, I set out in an excellent posting-carriage. Thanks to the kind attentions of the Commissary, I did not suffer much from this rapid journey, different in every respect from the slow and fatiguing march of our convoy. In two days we were in Vienna, where they made me alight at the Chief Office of Police. 'Your lodging is rather high up,' said the Commissary, assisting me to ascend the stairs, 'but I hope you will be satisfied with it.'

"Four high stories were certainly very fatiguing to my feeble and chained legs, but with time and assistance I at last surmounted them. The apartment was tolerable, nay too elegant for one who a few days later was to inhabit a dungeon. I made this remark smilingly to my guide. 'Who knows,' replied he, 'what may happen? Perhaps you may soon be still better lodged, and more fortunate.' He then took leave of me, to give an account of his mission to the Minister of Police.

"It was not difficult to understand the meaning of these last words, notwithstanding their ambiguity. The end of my being conducted to Vienna, which I had before guessed, was explained: they wished to subject me to a last trial, of which the only result for me must be perpetual captivity. Towards evening the Director-General of Police came to inform me that the next day I should see his Superior. The following morning Count Sedlenitzky was introduced; his visit was short, and seemed a sort of preparation to that of a great personage, which he announced, but leaving me to guess his name.

"It would perhaps have been more prudent to have refused to see Prince Metternich, in order not to alienate still further the mind of the Emperor; but I was resolved to speak to him, and to protest warmly against one infamous assertion in the Act of Accusation,—an assertion which assailed my honour and which I owed it to myself to repel with indignation. I therefore declared to the Minister of Police that I awaited his commands. I expected impatiently, I confess, this interview with the statesman whose influence over the destinies of Italy was so powerful.

"The morning passed without his appearing, and the day was drawing to a close, when a noise of doors and hurried steps made me aware that the counsellor of kings was approaching. On seeing him enter I arose, bowed, and attempted to stand; but he graciously made me a sign to be seated. 'You live very high up, Count,' said he, drawing near the sofa, on which he took a place by my side: 'permit me to take breath before I inquire after your health.'

"We remained some seconds in silence; he then resumed.

"'I see that you are better than when at Villach, and I rejoice at it. If the melancholy state in which you were at Milan had been known at Vienna, you would not have been exposed to the hardships of so fatiguing a journey; but I now congratulate myself on a circumstance to which I owe the pleasure of seeing you, and perhaps that also of being in some degree useful to you,' he continued, with an expression of interest. 'The rigorous treatment which you have undergone, Count, cannot fail to afflict those who, like myself, know to what a hopeless cause you have sacrificed yourself; and, believe me, it has grieved his Majesty to be obliged to suppress his habitual clemency. Unfortunately the proceedings against you existed, the law had judged, and the future tranquillity of Italy demanded examples; not that we henceforward have anything to fear, but it was necessary that justice should take its course, and that public opinion should be satisfied. You have done for your party all that it was possible for a man to do; you have served it to the last moment with devotion, although you must have doubted the success of your enterprise. What was then only conjecture is now become certainty, not only in the case of the Peninsula, but in that of all Europe. The two contending principles have come to a trial of strength, and everywhere the result has justified our expectations. A few energetic measures on the part of the Great Powers of Europe have sufficed to show that revolutionary ideas cannot maintain a struggle in the hearts of the people against legitimacy. In this state of things, you will easily perceive that we attach small importance to learning more in detail all that has passed in the different parts of Italy before and after the revolutions of Naples and Piedmont. If then I now seek information from you, Count, it is absolutely only in an historical point of view, and,' he hastened to add, 'with a due regard to your interest and to that of your companions in captivity. His Majesty, doubtless, would not fail to be grateful for any confidential information which you alone can supply.'

"'Your Highness gives me too much importance,' I replied, bowing respectfully; 'and to satisfy you it would be necessary'—

" 'That you should merely appeal to your memory,' replied the Prince.

" 'Alas, I find there only the sorrows of my own affections: the rest is entirely effaced. Will your Highness allow me to make one protestation,' I continued, to give another turn to the conversation, —'a protestation which concerns in the highest degree that which is most precious to me on earth, my honour?'

" A slight sign indicated that I might proceed.

" 'I have read with profound grief in the Act of Accusation, that I had permitted a plot to be planned against the life of General Bubna, and that I had consented to his assassination. This is an abominable calumny, against which I protest steadfastly, and with the more reason, as the result of the examinations proves that I indignantly opposed the plan of attacking the General, if the dreams of two or three hairbrained youths may be called plans. Let Salvotti paint me in the blackest colours—let him make me out to be a dangerous conspirator, an obstinate culprit, deserving the most infamous punishment—I shall bow my head and submit to what I cannot prevent. But that he should lower me in the opinion of every one, by accusing me of having attempted the life of a man whom I esteem, and of whose friendship I am proud, is what I cannot endure without lamenting that I am prevented from publicly protesting against such an odious and cowardly act of vengeance.'

" The Prince, who had listened attentively, replied, 'This is certainly a serious inexactness; but, believe me, no one will have been deceived by it. The conduct of General Bubna towards you, the proofs of attachment which he has constantly shown you since you were a prisoner, are more than sufficient to disprove that hazarded assertion.'

"His Highness, returning to the subject of the historical information he hoped to have obtained from me, immediately said, 'Perhaps you might place greater confidence in one whose rank is higher than mine. I should not be jealous,' said he, smiling; 'and if you authorize me, I do not doubt but the august personage will himself come to hear what you may have to say, and to change your destiny and that of your friends.'

"I gave the Prince to understand that it would be useless; upon which he took leave of me, expressing his regret at not having been able, in spite of his wishes, to work out in my behalf the favourable and paternal intentions of his Majesty.

"My refusal to see the Emperor necessarily shortened my sojourn at Vienna. The next day I set out for Brünn, accompanied by the same Commissary, whose conduct towards me was throughout marked by the greatest kindness. In a few hours I reached the place of my destination. When I heard the gates of Spielberg close behind me, I bade adieu to everything that could offer consolation to my heart: little did I think or hope to find that of friendship."

Whilst I pitied Confalonieri from the bottom of my soul, I could not help admiring the modest simplicity with which he spoke of the great sacrifices he had made to honour. I respected for some time the silence into which he had fallen after the recital of his journey of which I foresaw too plainly the fatal consequences. A step taken fruitlessly on the part of a sovereign to obtain revelations from a state-prisoner, can only add a link to the chain of the poor captive. Disappointed pride changes into personal enmity that which before might be only the severity imposed by policy; and from that moment persecution takes a character of animosity which nothing can soften. My poor friend felt this also. I attempted to infuse some hope into him by speaking of his Countess, and the happy days he would yet spend with her, but he stopped me immediately, saying, "I can no longer indulge in illusions; my fate is irrevocably fixed. Here my life will end, while my unfortunate Theresa will consume hers in tears."

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER passing a few days in the outpouring of our hearts on the subject of our relatives and friends, and in conversing on the trials and the victims of the Inquisitorial Commission, we resumed our former habits of life. Spring crept on; the days were getting longer; and we could devote more time to our reading. In the evening, when it grew dark, we took up some philosophical, historical or literary question, and endeavoured to discuss it with logical precision. The kind Count would overcome his sorrow and his sufferings, to teach me the difficult art of arguing, and the still more difficult art of discovering and proclaiming truth in spite of the subtleties of self-love. He took the greatest pains to make me profit by his learning and experience. As he developed a point of abstruse science, his words flowed with a ready eloquence; his ideas were expressed with clearness and precision, and his arguments unrolled themselves like a long chain, of which the first and last ring are fastened together. Light shone upon my mind; my opinions became more settled, and I thanked God for having given me a friend so great in heart and knowledge. Then I stretched myself on my straw, not to court sleep, but to reflect on what I had heard, and to profit by the new ideas with which Confalonieri had enriched my imagination and intellect.

These days of study and fraternal conversation appeared to glide away with astonishing rapidity. In spite of the irons which loaded my body, my mind took flight, and found enjoyments of which kings and the rich are ignorant. Never had I better understood the truth, that thought constitutes the real greatness of man, and that it is by thought alone that he is able, even when a prisoner, to raise to the honour of God, and to the use of his fellow-creatures, a less perishable monument than dynasties and empires.

From day to day I became more impressed with this conviction. It smiled on my soul as a compensation for all the losses I had suffered, all the privations to which I was doomed. More elevated ideas took possession of my heart, and I became gradually prepared to sacrifice everything with readiness; to forget all,—all except those dear ones to whom I had cost so many tears.

To qualify myself for some great undertaking, one of those works which never die, I devoted every moment of daylight to the study of the poets and philosophers, and the hours of night to meditation on man and the destinies of nations. Sustained by this conscientious employment, my imagination became more fertile, my thoughts more elevated, and I had before me an horizon of bright hopes which the miseries of imprisonment could not darken.

I announced these hopes to Pellico and Maroncelli, and they both rejoiced to hear that, like themselves, I endeavoured to overcome adversity by the power of intellect. The active correspondence which, thanks to Caliban the convict, we kept up with these two interesting prisoners was also a great resource. The letters and poems of Pellico, especially, breathed such a tenderness of feeling, such pious resignation, and warm love of humanity, that we always derived profit and delight from their perusal. I may say with truth that no letter from a beloved mistress was ever received or opened with more eagerness than those we received from our Silvio.

With a few pinches of soot, brought by Caliban, we made a sort of ink, thick and muddy it is true, but such as enabled us to scrawl a few lines on the wretched paper we contrived to manufacture; and for pens we took straws or little bits of wood. These resources, the fruits of our own ingenuity and invention, made us feel proud of being indebted only to ourselves for a relief from the monotony of our existence, in which we experienced an indescribable comfort.

We learned that our friends were watched much less before our arrival; that their walk had been more extended and better situated; that there they could occasionally see human faces, and exchange a few words with some one; and that an Augustine friar, called Father Baptiste, had given them the most touching marks of interest and compassion.

"On your arrival," wrote Maroncelli, "we were deprived of every indulgence. Instead of our vast bastion, we were restricted to the narrow platform. But our courage has not abated. We have found in our confidence in God, and in our mutual affection, the strength to endure this fresh severity, already much softened by the happiness of knowing you, and of being known and loved by you."

Another of our fellow-sufferers, to whom I wrote for details respecting the other prisoners, replied to the following effect.

"In the next cell to ours are two prisoners; one from Brescia, named S——; the other, named Villa, from Fratta. They are both condemned to twenty years' *carcere duro* by the Inquisitorial Commission. They arrived at Spielberg some months before us, and have never quitted each other. S—— is the father of six children, whom he has left without the means of subsistence. He was judge in a small town of Lombardy, where he had acquired, as a clever lawyer and an upright magistrate, a reputation which was heightened by the most sincere piety and irreproachable conduct. His arrest was a subject of astonishment and grief throughout his district. Conveyed to the prisons of Venice, he was submitted to a lengthened process, which Salvotti conducted in such a manner as to cause him to be condemned to the galleys for twenty years. His whole crime was only having belonged for a short time to one of the secret societies; although he had withdrawn from it long before he had been made a judge, and had heard no more mention of it till brought before the Commission.

"Calm and resigned during the whole course of the proceedings, S—— redoubled his zeal in the practice of his religious duties; and full of confidence in the Divine mercy, he wrote a book, which is thought admirable for its wisdom and argument. His adieus to his family on leaving Venice were heart-rending. Already weak and ill, on his arrival at Spielberg he soon felt that his health was declining, and his life in danger; but no word of complaint escapes his lips,—the more he suffers, the more he prays.

"His companion, Villa, is a rich landowner of noble birth, who was as good a son as he was a kind husband. But although of a gentle and quiet disposition, his patience and resignation are far from equalling those of S——. While enjoying peaceably the happiness of a united family, and the possession of a large fortune, he was struck to the heart by finding himself on a sudden snatched from his dear home, and cast into the dungeons of Venice. Too weak in intellect to make a stand against Salvotti's snares, he was soon convicted of being a Carbonaro. Upon this, torments, menaces, and stratagems followed to extort disclosures from him. Poor Villa did not always come out triumphantly from these renewed attacks, because his head was not equal to his will. On the day that sentence was passed, he was astonished at the number of the condemned, and at finding such severe punishment awarded for a crime which, being unforseen by the Austrian code, had only been qualified as high-treason by a law posterior to their arrest. In the presence of the whole court he could not restrain his indignation against Salvotti, and against the Emperor himself. This rage made the Inquisitor smile, and only suggested to him these words, ‘He will calm himself!’

“Poor Villa was effectually calmed; he even fell into such a state of depression that his reason was despaired of. Twenty years of imprisonment made him shudder. ‘I shall die there!’ he often said. It was in vain that, during the journey, his companions spoke to him of his herculean strength, of his excellent health; ‘I shall die there,’ he repeated. The sight of Spielberg, the darkness of the dungeons into which we were at first thrown, the loathsome food, contributed to fix in his mind this melancholy and despairing conviction. Being left entirely alone for some months, he was unable to stand against the torments of solitude and the hardships of this treatment. His ideas became confused, his stout and robust person weak and bent, and death would soon have delivered him from his sufferings, had they not given him Judge S—— as a companion. Since then his decline has been less rapid; but the Spielberg diet has impoverished his blood, and the man who formerly appeared a colossus, is now only a macilent being wasted by fasting. Sensible and good, believing in a future life, and sincere in his faith, Villa prays to God, and occupies himself for days together in religious duties. After that he is resigned, and submits for awhile to his destiny, but only to relapse again into a state of despair from which nothing can rouse him. May the hour of his deliverance soon strike, and restore him to his young and loving wife! for his mind is so affected that he cannot live much longer in these dungeons.

“Next to these two victims of Salvotti are two other prisoners, whose punishment is, if possible, still more disproportioned to their pretended offences. One of them, Don Marco Fortini, was officiating priest of the parish of Fratta, where Villa lived. There cannot be a simpler, kinder, better man than poor Don Marco: he was Villa's friend; he loved him with all his soul, and confided in him as a brother. Without inquiring into reasons, he had no hesitation in following Villa to a meeting of patriots, and taking charge of a bundle of papers, which, by desire of his friend, he hid in one of the closets of the sacristy. After some time Villa was arrested, and Don Marco was subjected to a strict search, the result of which was the seizure of the papers by the Police.

" Conducted to Venice, the good priest was brought before the renegade Salvotti, who was delighted to be able to drag an ecclesiastic into the pretended conspiracy, from which he expected to reap a fortune. Don Marco protested his innocence; but he was told that he would be condemned to death, and the menace was fulfilled. After the sentence he was thrown into a subterraneous prison, and left for some days under the idea that he was going to be executed. His agony was great during this dreadful suspense, but greater still when he was taken from his dungeon to be led before the Patriarch of Venice, who was to conduct the proceedings of his *degradation*. It is from his own words that you should learn the history of this ceremony, to have an idea of the suffering of this minister of Christ. He related it to us one evening as follows.

" 'I was escorted by a number of turnkeys to the episcopal palace, and ushered into a spacious hall, in which the Patriarch sat surrounded by his clergy. To tell you what I felt at the sight of that imposing assembly would be impossible. It was a mixture of fear and consolation; of fear, on seeing the expression of severity in the features of those dignitaries of the church; of consolation, in considering that I found myself in the midst of my brethren in Christ. But, alas! I sought in vain some sign of pity in their impassible countenances; and my heart, already so weak and dejected, was near breaking, when the Patriarch made me a sign to draw near.

"'I stopped a few steps from him, in a more dreadful anxiety than that I had undergone when my sentence had been read to me before the Commission. This state of suspense lasted several seconds in uninterrupted silence. Then one of the assistants pronounced these fatal words: 'Being accused by the Inquisitorial Commission of belonging to the Society of Carbonari, by which the most horrible plots are devised against religion, the safety of the state, and private property, and being thereby convicted of the crime of high-treason against his Majesty the Emperor, the priest Don Marco Fortini, chaplain of Fratta, is condemned by us, Patriarch of the metropolitan church of Venice, assisted by all the clergy, to the penalty of solemn degradation, in the forms prescribed by the canon-law.'—A thunderbolt falling upon me could not have terrified me more. Degraded from my holy ministry! Great God! I was prepared for everything from the severity of man; but a sentence so infamous, so rarely pronounced in our days, and then only upon men guilty of the most atrocious crimes, far exceeded all that I had ever thought it possible to incur.

" 'In my despair I fell on my knees, bathed in tears, before the Patriarch, and clasping my hands I exclaimed, 'I am innocent!—mercy!—mercy!' but he heeded me not. 'In the name of Heaven,' I cried, 'listen to me! I would not ask for mercy if it were for my life; but I implore you, for the sake of my sacred office, of the dignity of priest with which I am invested. I have not deserved that it should be dishonoured in my person: no, I have fulfilled my duties with zeal, with love. I have preached our holy religion; I have been kind and charitable towards my parishioners; the poor have never knocked in vain at my gate; I have consoled the afflicted, I have assisted the sick. I should speak thus before God, who knows all things, and who will judge us all. In the name of that gracious God, hear me! send to my village, order an inquiry into my conduct, and, if it is not free from every bad action, then inflict on me this penalty, the name of which alone is more terrible than the sentence of death.'

" 'Neither my prayers nor my sobs could soften the Patriarch. I cried in vain for the last time that the Inquisitor Salvotti had deceived his Eminence: in vain I adjured my innocence in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—he did not listen; but, bidding me to rise, he directed the ceremony to begin.

" 'The words died on my lips. I got up, and in the keenest anguish of mind awaited my degradation.

They soon led me away, to invest me with all the sacred robes, as if I had been about to ascend to the altar. Then I was brought again into the presence of the Patriarch, who proceeded to strip me successively of each garment, repeating words directly contrary to those which had been pronounced by the Bishop at the time of my ordination. Nor was this all; my head was shaved, to obliterate every trace of the clerical tonsure, and the ends of my fingers were scratched with glass because they had touched the sacred utensils. But our gracious Lord strengthened me; and the emotions of anger and indignation, which arose in my soul during this iniquitous ceremony, gave way to the meekness of the servant of Christ, who ought to be able to bear all for the sake of him who endured every outrage and died upon the Cross.'

"It was thus," continued my correspondent, "that Don Marco related to us his sorrowful trials. Our eyes filled with tears as we listened to them. During the journey he suffered much from being chained to an old officer, whose rough character and soldier-like habits contrasted strangely with his mildness and modesty; yet Don Marco never lost that equanimity and patience which a pure conscience and stedfast faith alone can give. If Villa or Oroboni were downcast, he spoke to them of the future, and, leading their thoughts and hopes to God, he taught them to endure with resignation the sufferings sent by Providence. Faithful to his mission, of consoling the afflicted and gaining souls to the Lord, he exhorted his companions to resignation;

he wept with them, prayed for all, and touched and edified even the jailers by his meekness and unceasing charity.

"After his arrival at Spielberg, neither the isolation of the dungeon nor the cruel treatment we all endure have abated his courage, for his strength comes from Heaven. He has often responded to my song by some canticle or psalm, conveying an invocation to the Lord, a promise to drink without repining the cup of bitterness, or an exhortation to the other prisoners to seek their refuge in a trust on Him whose arms are ever open and whose mercy is without bound. He was taken from his solitude to be placed first with Villa, then with Oroboni; and he gave them both, in the most affectionate manner, every possible assistance. Oroboni he nursed till the hour of his death, regretting bitterly that he had no longer the power to administer the last sacrament to a dying friend. After the death of Oroboni, Don Marco received successively two or three other companions, to whom he was also a constant comforter. No one has proved better than he has done the beauty and power of religion under misfortune, and how superior is the resignation it inspires to that of reason and philosophy. Of this his present companion is a convincing example.

"Monari is an old man, full of knowledge, and a great admirer of the philosophers of antiquity. Early in his youth he gave himself up to the study of the classics, and became enthusiastically fond of the heroes of the Grecian and Roman republics. His love of antiquity increased at the universities of Bologna and

Padua; and his intelligence, which was as remarkable as his assiduity, enabled him to distinguish himself sufficiently to be made doctor of law, divinity and medicine. He had practised some time as an advocate, when the French revolution revived his republican predilections. Accordingly he hailed the arrival of General Bonaparte in Italy, and attended as a deputy the Comitia of Lyons. Disappointed in his dearest hopes, Monari remained faithful to his political creed, refused brilliant offers made him by Napoleon, and applied himself to science and art with increased ardour. His patriotic ideas were again roused in 1814, when Murat attempted to establish the unity and independence of Italy. He then became a member of the secret societies, and worked eagerly against foreign oppression; and when the attempt failed, he continued to belong to the association of the Carbonari. In 1818 he was seized, on suspicion of having taken part in the secret meetings, and condemned, by Salvotti's means, to twenty years of *carcere duro*.

"Bearing his misfortunes patiently, sometimes resigned, at other times listless, Monari seeks consolation in his studies. But his books, profound and metaphysical as they are, cannot arm him with a constancy which shall be proof against everything. He whose discourses are full of sentences from Zeno and Epictetus, who professes and comments on the doctrines of the Stoics, often sinks beneath the weight of despair; while the pious and simple Don Marco, whose science is confined to the Gospel, endures his misfortune with an angelic resignation. It is thus that the learned incredulity of the philosopher yields to the sincere faith of the minister of Christ. As for the rest, these two men, so essentially different in character and principles, live together in the best possible understanding, thanks to the tolerance and unalterable charity of Don Marco.

"Foresti and Bacchiega make up the number of the prisoners who were condemned at Venice. The first was a judge in the neighbourhood of Rovigo; the second is an old officer of the Italian army: they are both gifted with uncommon energy, and sustain bravely the hardships of captivity. With his talents and character, Foresti would have done honour to Italy had she been free; a foe to the foreigner, he became a Carbonaro in 1815, and was arrested as such in 1818. Salvotti and an Aulic Councillor, sent expressly by the Emperor when his sentence was about to be pronounced, subjected him to cruel trials; but he displayed admirable firmness; and it is certain that his imprisonment, however long and grievous it may be, will never extinguish or stifle in his heart the love of Italian independence.

"The beloved Oroboni was also condemned at Venice. You are already acquainted with his lamentable fate. God's will be done! and may he grant us the grace to die in the same saintlike manner as our much-regretted friend."

CHAPTER VII.

THIS studious life improved my heart and mind, and made me often forget the restraint of the prison. I should have been almost happy, but for the deep melancholy of the Count, and the new sufferings by which he was assailed. When he had almost overcome his nervous attacks, he became subject to palpitations of the heart and to arthritic spasms, which kept him to his pallet-bed for whole days, thus depriving him of the only relief which Spielberg afforded,—that of inhaling fresh air on the platform. Anxious on his account, I deeply regretted that he could not, like myself, live in a world of his own imagination, or take an interest in speculative questions. His mind was so constituted, that it required vigorous occupation in a sphere of action in which the results were immediate and positive. Being a practical rather than a theoretical man, he could not see himself reduced to the reveries of a dungeon, without feeling the agony so fatal to ardent and enterprising spirits when forced to complete inaction.

The days succeeded one another without bringing any change in the monotony of our existence. But there was a charm even in this; it formed a contrast to the anxious life we had led some months before, and it gave us room to hope that we need not fear any fresh persecution. Suddenly, we received one day a delightful surprise. A noise was heard in the cell on our left. In order to ascertain whether it proceeded from a new prisoner, I made the usual signal at the wall. It was our friend Tonelli, whom we had left ill at Milan. We heard from him that the Countess Confalonieri had set out for Vienna; that the sentence against the Brescians had been pronounced, and that they had been conducted to Laybach, where poor Rinaldini was to pass two years in prison, and Bigoni one. Tonelli told us also that two natives of Mantua, Manfredini and Albertini, both condemned to fifteen years' *carcere duro,* had come with him to Spielberg, and that Moretti would shortly arrive. "As to other news," he added, "all that I can learn is, that Europe is in a state of perfect tranquillity, and that every one in Italy takes an interest in the fate of the prisoners of Spielberg. People hope that the Emperor will issue an amnesty on the event of his approaching journey to Milan.—But I forgot to tell you that Lord Byron is dead; the *Gazzetta di Milano* has announced the event with exultation: he died in Greece."

"Poor Byron!" we exclaimed sorrowfully: "to die so young, in all the force of his genius, and at the moment when his devotion to the cause of Greece was about to redeem the first errors of his life!"

The news brought us by Tonelli still formed the most interesting subject of our conversations, when one evening we were informed that the following day we should be conducted before an ecclesiastic sent from Vienna. Who could this man be? and what did he want with us? We asked each other these and similar questions, concluding, after many conjectures, that he was probably a priest sent to replace Father Baptiste, whose loss Pellico and Maroncelli did not cease to deplore. The arrival of this person produced an inexhaustible topic for our curiosity.

Early the next morning I was on the watch; and when Schiller appeared, requesting me to go out with him, I was as delighted as a boy dismissed from school. It was now about the end of July, and the two or three roses on the stunted plants of the platform breathed forth such a rich perfume that I could not but stop to inhale it. I longed to pluck one of them,—the rose was the favourite flower of my mother,—but I resisted the temptation: they were sacred; my fellow-prisoners might enjoy them as fully as myself. They brought back, however, the memory of my boyhood, and that of my dear parent. This recollection softened my heart. Touched with the deepest emotion, I approached the spot where the priest awaited me, to administer counsel and consolation.

"There, that is the place!" said Schiller bluntly, pointing to a door at which he desired me to knock.

"Come in," said the person within.

I entered, and beheld before me a priest, who rose from his seat on my approach. I bowed to him respectfully.

"I am glad to see you," he said; "will you take a chair?" pointing to one close to his own. "How has the air of Spielberg agreed with your health?"

"Not very well," I replied.

"Ah, I see you are used to somewhat larger apartments and better fare. I feel for you. Our Saviour, the King of Heaven, was scourged with rods like a criminal, and died upon the cross as a malefactor, though he deserved neither. But with us, poor sinful men, it seldom happens that we do not incur our chastisements by our own fearful crimes. How then are we to appease the wrath of Heaven? By repentance and prayer. These very words were uttered by our august sovereign in the last audience which I had the distinguished honour of obtaining from him, two days before my departure. 'Go,' said our great Emperor, 'to Spielberg; labour to save the souls of the prisoners confined there; preach our holy religion to them. They either know it not, or have abandoned it. Work their repentance, and a day will arrive when I shall not forget them.' Deeply affected by such benevolence, I have come here to accomplish the merciful mission his Majesty has confided to me alone. Great, doubtless, is the responsibility I have assumed; but, with aid from above, I trust to fulfil my new duties to the satisfaction of that generous monarch, the father of his people, who has deigned to select the humblest of his servants, Don Stephano Paolowitz, to render him, by the aid of Providence, an instrument for your conversion."

This homily was delivered with an air of apostolic dignity, which contrasted strangely with his somewhat vulgar demeanor and burlesqued Venetian accent. In the meantime I observed with attention the personage whom the Emperor of thirty-two millions of souls had himself selected to preach the Word of God to us. He was a man whose body, though ill made, displayed strength; he was tall, but his neck seemed to have grown into his shoulders, and this, together with the stoop of his head, diminished the athletic appearance of his stature. His black and sleek hair was matted over a low and retreating forehead, based by two strongly-marked eyebrows; his dark-brown eyes lurked behind two heavy lids, which were almost always half-closed; his ruddy and plump cheeks betokened robust health, but at the same time rendered his face so devoid of expression that it developed nothing but vacant curiosity and inoffensive vanity, disguised under the modesty of monachism.

"A great proof of confidence is this his Majesty has shown you," said I, after some minutes of silence, "and I feel rejoiced at it; I shall gladly receive the consolations of religion from a minister of the Gospel who can feel for and commiserate the woes of the captive."

"Undoubtedly, undoubtedly," replied Don Stephano; "the Emperor sent me hither to comfort you, to induce you to bear your trials patiently: happy am I to be so well received by you—you, in whom I feared that irreligion and an obstinacy in certain evil principles had taken root. But I hope that solitude has taught wisdom. You do not reject my ministry, as you did that offered you at Milan?—you consent to see me?"

"I do, sir."

"And to listen to me?"

"As often as you call upon me to do so."

"Right, right! Ah, it was not without reason that I expected when I started to find consolation here. All will be well; his sacred Majesty does not desire the death of a sinner. But your companion, do you think he too would attend me if asked?"

"My companion?—with the same readiness as myself."

Don Stephano's countenance implied a doubt of this. "They have told me terrible things about him. Has he at all recovered his health?"

"It is not so bad as at Milan and during our journey, but he still suffers much."

"Poor fellow! he will get round ere long, no doubt; and then what is it, after all, compared with the death from which you have both been delivered by the mercy of his Majesty! But for that mercy, my son, you had been lost, for every one advised your execution: but the Emperor, in his goodness of heart, overruled his counsellors. You can assure me then that the Count will see me without any ill feeling? I feared, I confess, a different reception from him; after all they have told me of his conduct and character, I little expected any condescension on his part. He has then become calm and reasonable?"

"Confalonieri has been calumniated to the Emperor by very dangerous enemies," I replied. "I doubt not that a few moments' interview will convince you that all the accusations so wickedly brought against him are mere scandalous falsehoods. Would that his Majesty could be informed of this!"

"He shall, my son, he shall through me, who have free access to his august presence. Return to your prison, put confidence in me, and inform the Count that I shall send for him in a few minutes."

I returned to Confalonieri, and had hardly communicated to him the impression which the appearance and remarks of our new confessor had produced upon me, when they came to conduct him to the chapel. On his return we compared notes, we recalled every word, every gesture of Don Stephano; and we came to the conclusion that, although the ecclesiastic chosen by the Emperor was not a miracle of wisdom and knowledge, there was nothing about him to render his good faith or good will doubtful. This was also the opinion of our friends; there was not one among us but felt sure that we possessed a certain means of undeceiving the Emperor as to the character and culpability of the prisoners at Spielberg.

Don Stephano, as he had told me, determined to fulfill his mission by moderation: he was averse to forcing the conscience. It was therefore full fifteen days after my interview ere he called for me again.

"Now then," said he, after having asked me how I was, "now, my son, what is the state of your religious feelings? Religion is the one thing needful in this life, and it is upon this subject I want to talk with you. Have you thought upon it since you last saw me? I am satisfied that your refusal to partake of the rites of the church at Milan arose more from ignorance than obstinacy, and that it is which I would fain remedy. Now then give me the history of your life at full length,—where you were born, where educated, all that happened to you up to the moment of your arrest."

"Do you want a confession, or a mere recital of facts? For the first I am unprepared."

"Oh no, merely a confidential account."

"I see: the physician of the soul, like that of the body, finds it necessary to know the source of the evil ere he can cure it."

I seated myself by his side, and began. "I was born in France, near Paris, at the time of the Directory"—

"Of the Directory?" echoed Don Stephano; "you mean at the time of the revolution. There were no churches at that time, were there?"

"They were not re-established till several years after, by the First Consul."

"Good God! but how then—are you sure you have been baptized?"

"I am sure of it, as far as the word of a fond and pious mother goes; but as the ceremony took place only a few days after my birth, I cannot say that I recollect it myself."

"Ah, your baptism is probable,—probable enough; still there is a doubt about it, and in a matter of such consequence one ought to be certain. However, my son, proceed."

I recounted to Don Stephano, where and how I had received my education; my life at college; how I had served for a short time in the army; had become a young man about town; then travelled to Geneva: in fine, I gave him a sketch of my life up to my arrest, and was about finishing, when he interrupted me.

"But the most important event you have passed over in silence,—the part you took in the secret societies, and which brought you to Spielberg."

"I thought it irrelevant to waste time upon matters which can be of no importance, as they no longer exist."

"Not at all, my son: it is in those impious societies that you have lost the fruits of the pious education of your mother, and the wise advice of your worthy tutor and good sister: there you learned unhappily to disown the rights of sovereign legitimacy, to deny the truths of the Gospel, and to trample underfoot everything reverenced by society; to proclaim regicide, atheism, and republicanism as the bases of social re-organization. This being the case, ought I not to know exactly where the evil lies? to learn the fatal maxims which have eaten into your heart, that I may apply the antidote and cure your poor sinful soul, gangrened by the contagious breath of these monstrous corrupters of youth, these infuriate enemies of morality and religion? Great God! the mere thought of what is practised in those infernal societies of conspirators makes me shudder with horror and indignation."

"Was it not said in the first ages of the church, sir, that the Christians committed every species of crime at their nightly congregations,—that they inculcated disobedience to the emperors, contempt for the laws, incited slaves to revolt, and even murdered infants in the celebration of their abominable mysteries? Is it not possible that the secret societies of the day are as much vilified as those of the early believers?"

Don Stephano started back with surprise and indignation. "Do you mean to say," he cried, "that you compare the holy precepts of the Gospel with the execrable principles of the Carbonari? the virtuous disciples of the Apostles with the fiends who have vowed destruction to all honest men?"

"Far was so odious a comparison from my thoughts," I replied; "all I intended to convey was, that people are strangely deceived as to what passes at those political associations,—as to the common ridiculous opinions about republicanism, and what is called rational philosophy. Any feelings of implacable hatred towards every head that wears a crown, all silly oaths vowing destruction to monarchy, I have no hesitation in disowning as unworthy the thought of any just or reasonable being."

"God be thanked a thousand times!" cried Don Stephano; "we have made a great step by this abjuration."

"Pardon me, it is no abjuration, sir; one can only abjure errors when one has with heart and soul participated in them: those of which I speak never for a moment occupied my thoughts."

"Never, my son? Do you renounce all fraternity with the Jacobins, those blood-suckers, those regicides?"

"Most certainly I do."

"Well then you can have no objection to inform me what you saw and heard in those demoniacal conventicles."

"Allow me to explain myself on that point, sir. If I have committed a fault in meddling with politics, I think I have expiated it by what I have suffered. What have I done in the Austrian dominions to deserve a sentence of death? Have I conspired with the subjects of the Emperor against the security of his throne? No, the papers of my trial will prove that. Does the ebullition of a moment, immediately followed by a complete abandonment of all projects hostile to the government of Italy, merit imprisonment for life in Spielberg, accompanied by the harshest treatment? Is it to be believed that the Emperor, had he known the circumstances of the case, would have sanctioned such treatment? No, sir, no. Kings ought to be just even in their anger; and I look to you to make his Majesty aware how much he has been deceived about the young Frenchman, the victim of the animosity of Salvotti."

"I undertake to do so," said Don Stephano; "it is a part of my duty; but it would be as well if you made me thoroughly acquainted with all that happened prior to your arrival in Italy, which would serve to convince the Emperor."

"You will be able to convince him much better by supplicating him in my name to call for the evidence on my trial."

"Be it so, my son. When you know me better, you will confide in me as a friend and an advocate; at present let us confine ourselves merely to the state of your religious feelings. Here is a little book which contains some excellent prayers: in a few days we will commence our course of discipline. How happy shall I be to say to the Emperor, 'Gracious Sire, my mission has been blessed by God'! I trust that at my intercession he will allow you to attend mass every Sunday; this will be a great favour."

"A favour, sir, which is granted to the greatest scoundrels shut up in Spielberg: we alone—"

Don Stephano lifted his eyes to Heaven as he said, "Ah, but in the eye of the sovereign you are far more guilty than they. However, it depends upon yourself to disarm his anger."

Some days after this Don Stephano, who saw the prisoners in rotation, sent for me a third time. His countenance was pensive, his manner prepossessing, and there was something in the tone with which he wished me good morning more benevolent and friendly than I had before observed.

"You have occupied much of my thoughts," he said, "since I last saw you."

"Have I indeed, sir?"

"Yes; the uncertainty about your baptism has destroyed my rest, it militates so strongly against your salvation."

"But everything goes to confirm that I was privately baptized," I replied; "I have taken the communion, and that would never have been allowed had they not been satisfied."

"No proof at all,—no proof at all!" interrupted Don Stephano; "'tis too often the case that we pass lightly over the most important things. I have been to consult the Bishop of Brünn on the subject, for to me it is a case of conscience. How could I pretend to undertake the building of your conversion with the foundation faulty?"

This expression, conversion, required an explanation, and I was about to ask it, when Don Stephano hastily added, "After all, the affair is so simply remedied, my son, that it need give us no trouble whatever. I will baptize *sub conditione*; all will then be in due course. This is an act of condescension which will cost you nothing, and which I ask first for your own sake, and next for my own. Would you refuse your poor mother, were she here, with tears in her eyes, and said to you, 'My son, when I brought thee into the world, at the cost of so many pangs, wouldst thou, had God miraculously gifted thee with reason, have refused, on my bed of agony, to receive the water of salvation, and the sacred sign of our faith on thy brow?' Do now, my son, what thou wouldst then have done from love and gratitude to thy beloved mother. Let no false shame restrain thee. Prove, by receiving conditionally the divine sacrament of baptism, that thou deniest not the religion of thy fathers."

Where is the man, even at the height of prosperity, who would not have been touched by this appeal in the name of her who brought him into the world? Where is the captive who would not have shed tears over so affecting a recollection? Mine poured down fast, and they came from the heart. The images of my mother and sister wholly filled my mind. I dropped upon my knees and prayed long and fervently.

"You consent, do you not?" said Don Stephano, placing his hand upon my shoulder.

I raised my head and made a sign in the affirmative.

"Oh, how rejoiced I am!" he exclaimed: "what a blessing is this! what an inspiration from Heaven! My son, I will prepare everything for the ceremony. Leave me now," he continued, shaking me affectionately by the hand; "I must go and say a mass of thanksgiving."

The deep emotion which the words of the ecclesiastic had aroused within me had not subsided when I re-entered my cell. The pious thoughts which the name of my poor mother had awakened, connected as they were with all the recollections of infancy, made me feel the necessity of pouring out my whole heart into the bosom of that friend who was ever ready to interest himself in all that affected me.

The rest of the day was spent in conversing with Confalonieri on the events of my early life; and so strong was the impression produced on my mind, that the next morning the mere sight of the roses on our platform revived the same train of ideas. My imagination carried me back to the time when I used to gather basketsful of them to decorate the temple of our Lord, and to strew before the Host at the procession of the Fête-Dieu.

On the day appointed the Commandant of Spielberg himself came to fetch me. "Your chains," he said, "must first of all be taken off. The sacrament of baptism is one of salvation and deliverance: those who receive it must not enter the temple of our Saviour with irons on their limbs." Accordingly, by the order of the Commandant, I was freed from my fetters, and conducted into the presence of Don Stephano. "Are you fully prepared?" he asked: "do you not feel an intense joy in again becoming a member of the

Church? His Majesty, to whom I have communicated the happy news, takes a lively interest in it, and so also do the whole Court: great is the satisfaction of every one."

As he pronounced these last words, the suspicion struck me that my undergoing the ceremony might be imputed either to weakness or hypocrisy, and I replied, "I again repeat to you, sir, that I myself can have no doubt whatever of my former baptism; it therefore appears to me the wisest plan to refuse receiving this sacrament."

"Sacred Heaven!" cried Don Stephano, knitting his brows: "what do you say, my son? have you not given your word? what will they think of you? what will they think of me, if this, which I have so particularly announced to his Majesty, should not take place? You cannot retract; it is impossible!" He then again appealed to me in the name of my mother, and he so affected me that I consented to follow him to the church.

On crossing its threshold, the thought of the death which I had so miraculously escaped a few months before came vividly to my recollection, and deeply did I feel that the hand of God was stretched out to preserve me. I hastened to the altar, and fell on my knees to return thanks in prayer.

In this state of mind I devoutly advanced to receive the sacrament of conditional baptism. The words of the priest produced the deepest impression upon me; and when he put the question, "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty, and in his only son Jesus Christ, who died for us upon the cross?" I answered in the affirmative with a feeling of devout inspiration, so holy was it and so tranquillizing.

The next day my fetters were again fastened on. My limbs were chained, but my spirit was in the path of beatitude, under the Divine care, and beyond the interference of man.

CHAPTER VIII.

Don Stephano had not deceived us. On the following Sunday the doors of the cells were successively opened, and, at a given signal, all the state-prisoners came out into the corridor. This unexpected meeting, after so many months of separation, was a moment of happiness. They embraced and wept over each other: then all gathered round Confalonieri, giving tokens of the truest affection and veneration. Thus surrounding him, we all advanced towards the chapel. On crossing the platform, the ravages which captivity had made upon each became strikingly visible. We soon arrived at the grated gallery which Don Stephano had allotted us: to the left, near the organ, were seated the Venetian prisoners.

"Ah, there is poor Pellico!" exclaimed Borsieri in a tone of fraternal fondness. "Good God, how altered he is!" and with his finger he pointed out that Silvio, whom we all loved, and whose features I was so desirous of contemplating. Never did I gaze upon a countenance more sweet and yet melancholy in its expression; never did features more accurately correspond with the picture of ingenuousness and angelic goodness I had preconceived in my mind of the author of those letters which revealed in every line so many adorable qualities. His pallid forehead, chiseled in the noblest proportions,—his eyes, so full of tenderness and inspiration,—the smile upon his lips, from which never proceeded aught but tolerance and love, produced an impression so touching in their resignation, that I was ready to cry out, "Silvio! do I behold thee at last? Silvio, I love thee, and would gladly give half the days of my life to clasp thee in my arms!" Most deeply did the sight of this celebrated author of the *Francesca da Rimini* awaken my sympathy; and the thinness of his cheeks, the wanness of his complexion augmented it. Too clearly did they indicate the effects which the rigours of long captivity had wrought upon a frame naturally delicate.

Near him, on his knees, was his companion in misfortune Maroncelli, whose intelligent and expressive physiognomy did not belie the idea which his lively correspondence had led me to form of him. The vivacity of his eye, the animation of his manner and bearing, altogether convinced me that the warmth of his temperament had resisted, and would long resist, the fatal consequences of a prison-life. Beloving and in turn beloved by Pellico, it was easy to see by their reciprocal glances that but one thought, one desire actuated both—that their sufferings had fused their souls into a union dissoluble only by death. My looks were long fixed upon these two friends, for whom so many evils were yet in store ere they could return to their families; nor did I direct my attention to the other captives before I had deeply graven their lineaments upon my mind.

By his pious abstraction, by the movement of his lips as he murmured fervent prayers, by his rejoicing aspect, like that of an affectionate son re-entering the house of his father after a long exile, I recognised Don Marco, whose beautiful eyes, glistening with tears, were now bent devoutly upon the altar, now raised towards Heaven, as if to implore the blessing of once again being invested with the sacerdotal robes and celebrating the sacrifice of the mass. Innocence, unassuming goodness, angelic resignation, and faith in the Almighty breathed forth from the countenance of the poor priest who had been so cruelly stripped of his apostolic mission. Expressions like these I vainly sought in the lengthened and pale countenance of the Judge S——, who also prayed fervently at a short distance from Don Marco.

Next to the judge was an old man, with long grey locks, whose face was yet plump and ruddy, despite seventy years of age and six of imprisonment. There was something happy and serene about his large and open forehead, his prominent eyes and smiling lips, and, but for the dress he wore, no one would have believed him to be an inhabitant of the dungeons of Spielberg. On looking at him, his finely-formed head recalled the idea of one of the sages of ancient Greece, calm under every misfortune, always free in thought however fettered in body. "Is not that Monari?" I asked. The reply confirmed my conjecture.

"That one beyond, with dejected looks and hollow eyes, who seems so exhausted, and, though a tall man, is bent down into a dwarf, must be Villa," said Castillia. "Poor fellow, he has but a few months to live! As for the last one, with the stern look and bushy black hair, he appears to bear his fate in such a manner as ought to make us resigned to our own."

"That is Foresti," answered one of our companions near us, pointing out the vigour and resolution imprinted on his features,—"Foresti, who, like Ajax, doubtless mutters between his teeth, 'I will foil them yet, though even the gods oppose me!'"

The tinkling of the bell, announcing that the priest was about to ascend to the altar, put a stop to our whisperings. We listened to the mass in silence; and when it was terminated, we returned to our dismal dwellings in the same order we had come, regretting to be so soon separated, but consoling ourselves by repeating, "Next Sunday—next Sunday!"

These weekly meetings, though short, became to us a source of delightful solace. A shake of the hands, a few affectionate words, any observation upon our several studies, any little news, given and received during our passage from our cells to the chapel, formed a subject for incessant conversation during the rest of the day. Rich in thoughts, and full of the hope that our cruel destiny would one day terminate, we were still sufficiently endued with courage and imagination to divert our mind from our deplorable condition,—sometimes even to amuse ourselves with the droll figures we looked in our present accoutrements.

Sunday at first was to us, what it is to all who labour and suffer, a day of relaxation, a change in the monotony of a wretched existence. Soon however, thanks to the religious sentiments with which solitude, self-examination, or memory had inspired the greater part of us, it became consecrated to meditation and prayer; and never did we leave the chapel after attending divine service, without feeling a more fixed resignation to our lot.

This religious disposition, this return to our early belief, so natural to us in our unhappy circumstances, led us to listen to the instructions of Don Stephano attentively, though we had soon discovered he knew nothing, and that his head was unable to make up for his want of learning. We gave him credit for his good intentions, and allowed him to believe that his discourses and exhortations contributed to work out the happy change in our hearts, which misfortune and pious reminiscences had alone produced. Often on hearing him teach us the catechism, just as if we had been a set of children, we were almost ready to smile; but we restrained ourselves by the recollection, that it is not given to all to announce the Word of God with the eloquence and authority of an apostle, and that in matters of faith it is the actual doctrine and not the form that one must regard.

Don Stephano had reason therefore to be very well content with the prisoners of state during his first and long stay at Spielberg. They listened to him; they appeared obedient to his instructions, and convinced by his arguments; and they confided in him for the amelioration of the rules of the prison, and the gradual propitiation of the Emperor. "The more I see you," he would say, "the more I am persuaded that you have been misrepresented to his Majesty; but rely upon me, I will render so good an account of your conduct that all his prejudices shall be removed."

When the time arrived for fulfilling my religious duties, far from refusing, as I had done at Milan, to re-enter the bosom of the Church, I felt myself bound by sentiment and conviction to return to the pious practices of a worship, of which my mother and sister afforded me such touching examples. My conversion, after all, was their work; for they operated upon my mind, not by analysis and reasoning, but through an irresistible claim upon me to adore the same God and recite the same prayers they did.

I drew so much consolation from the change effected in my religious ideas, that not a day passed but I rejoiced within myself at having silenced the sophisms of doubt and the rebelliousness of pride.

Though I had firmly refused to divulge anything respecting politics, considering that to be a subject which ought not to interfere in my religious converse, I was not the less in favour with Don Stephano. Satisfied with my conduct, he condoled with me on having been so cruelly punished for the error of a moment, and promised to urge upon the Emperor the circumstance elicited by the trial, that I had not conspired in Lombardy with any of his Italian subjects. "Set your mind at rest," said he, on taking leave of me, after several months' residence at Spielberg; "now that you are reconciled with God, it is my duty that you should be reconciled with man; and I hope to succeed, by making you known by word of mouth to our gracious Sovereign, who, like the Almighty, of whom he is the image and representative on earth, desires not the death of the sinner, but his repentance and salvation."

Thus I parted with Don Stephano, who was about to spend the remainder of the winter at Vienna, whilst I returned to my wretched den, where I found darkness, want, and my beloved friend, whose sufferings increased with the severity of the weather.

Our roses on the platform had long been stripped of their leaves; the days became shorter; winter had come to augment the hardships of our confinement. The light of day was exchanged for twilight, and the cold was so intense as to prevent our letting fresh air into our cell. Our clothes were of the same materials during the heat of the dog-days, as in the twelve or fifteen degrees of cold that is felt in the climate of Moravia. A scanty jacket of thin cloth and a pair of trowsers in tatters were all we had to protect us. After a brisk walk of only a few minutes I have been so terribly seized by cold, that my breath has stopped, my blood has reverted to my heart, and my weak and benumbed limbs could scarcely convey me back. Yet, the next day, an insatiable desire to look on the vault of Heaven, instead of the stone ceiling of the prison, made me return to my walk. When I was unable to exchange the thick atmosphere of the dungeon for the pure air of the platform, my thoughts languished, my studies were neglected, and sadness overpowered me. Often did I persist in walking, in spite of the raging wind, and the snow that was falling in great flakes. The compassionate Krall would cry out, "You will get your death—come in, come in!" but I preferred continuing. Confalonieri himself, notwithstanding his suffering and my entreaties, attempted to do the same; but a few moments sufficed to send him back to his bed for several weeks.

Alas! each day my poor friend grew weaker, and I was unable to recall him from the melancholy in which the remembrance of his Countess continually plunged him. To all my endeavours to encourage him he would reply, "I shall never see her again! Poor Theresa!—poor angel!" Then he would beckon me to leave off a conversation which made his heart bleed.

"God will reunite you"—

"In another world!"—he replied, sighing profoundly; and we embraced each other in silence.

How could I have combated this gloomy presentiment, seeing, as I did, that the Count's health declined rapidly? I myself suffered from want of proper nourishment, and felt my strength decrease daily. Although my mind was occupied, and the hours, thanks to study, flew rapidly, I sometimes experienced that languor which is the result of inanition, and the forerunner of discouragement and melancholy. If I, so young and so robust, doubted my power of resisting many years of a similar life, how could I hope that an unfortunate being, with health already undermined by sickness, could long sustain that mortal trial? The conviction that I was about to undergo such a loss filled my soul, and I dwelt intently on all the chimerical plans of escape we had begun to form on seeing the sympathy shown us by Schiller in spite of his roughness.

This good man would often repeat to us, "Take courage: better days are in store for you." And sometimes he came in with a porringer of potatoes, hidden under his greatcoat, saying to me, "I am sure you must be hungry." I thanked him with all my heart for his charity; and I could not help fancying that he was destined by God to be the instrument of our deliverance. This uncertain glimmering of liberty sufficed sometimes to re-animate my friend, and was an inconceivable blessing to us both.

The winter of 1825 was extremely severe: we all suffered from it, but Pellico especially. His precious letters became less frequent in proportion as his strength declined. During some days we even feared for his life; but our grief was soon succeeded by a most lively satisfaction, when we heard that his health improved. Shortly after a few lines from his hand came to confirm the news,—a happiness which caused us to say that Spielberg also had its joys. We had so great an affection for Silvio, that his death would have been the most irreparable loss. His pious correspondence with Confalonieri, who had exhausted the resources of reading, was for our poor friend a constant subject of tender outpourings and profound reflections. It taught us more and more how much the resignation which rises from a belief in Christ, and a faith in his promises, remains unshaken under the severest calamities.

Would it had pleased God that the unfortunate Colonel Moretti, who had been placed in a cell adjoining ours, had possessed that religious patience which sustains the body and at the same time sanctifies the soul! He would not have fallen into a state of excitement that made us fear for his senses. Tortured by Salvotti up to the day he was sentenced, he resisted during two years all his trials. Nothing could induce him to deviate from the system of denial which he had adopted; neither the depositions of the co-accused, nor the lies and menaces of the Inquisitor.

Salvotti, furious at not being able to get him condemned to death, amused himself, after reading his sentence, by saying, "You are only condemned to fifteen years of *carcere duro*, it is true; but you are sixty: you are old, and to you Spielberg will be an eternal sepulchre." The Colonel, scarcely mastering his just anger, repeated, "I am innocent." Before the Commission, and on the pillory, he protested against the iniquity of his sentence; and his last words to the Commissary of Police who escorted him to Spielberg, and who exhorted him to hope for the Imperial clemency, were, "I do not ask for mercy, but justice."

Nearly overpowered by the complete isolation in which he was kept, when he learned that we were near him, he thought himself saved. "Ah, my friends," said he, "your neighbourhood restores me to life,—it is long since I have been able to open my heart, or that I have heard anything but odious words! If you knew what those wretches have made me suffer, to what villanies they have resorted, in order to make me confess! That Salvotti!—his name alone fevers me with rage. Like a vampire, he would have sucked my blood and yours; yet this fiend is overwhelmed with favours by the Emperor, and the Italians tremble before him!"

We inquired after his health.. "It is but weak," he replied. "Sometimes I feel as if life were about to leave me; but I will live,—I will live, to teach Salvotti that the most sacred laws of justice and honour are not to be trampled under-foot with impunity. The happiness of your intercourse re-animates my courage: I feel that I shall survive my fifteen years of imprisonment, and that I shall again see dear Italy."

Every day we called him to the wall, and spoke to him of his trial, his first captivity, and his companions. Thanks to this diversion, his head by degrees became calmer, and his wounded heart was relieved. Nothing could have made me better acquainted with the constant kindness and devotion of Confalonieri than his conduct to Colonel Moretti. Although so ill, and scarcely able to sustain himself, he daily stood for hours with his head against the wall, unremittingly continuing wearisome conversations, merely in the hope of giving some solace to our friend. If I observed to him that he exhausted his strength, if I entreated him to end a colloquy that had lasted some time, he would reply, "Can the slight pain which this fatigue causes me be compared to the benefit that poor Moretti derives? How, would you have me resist the pleasure of still being able to do some good,—of alleviating the weariness of a man whose fate is so deplorable? Would to Heaven that I might contribute as well to soothe the evils of all those who suffer within these ramparts! I should no longer think myself abandoned by God. Believe me, my friend, he alone has reached the lowest depth of misery, who has no more the power of wiping away tears, or reviving hope, or bestowing joy. Let me then listen to our solitary neighbour. As we speak of his campaigns, his soul expands, and his mind is refreshed. I can assure you that when, from excess of fatigue, I am obliged to leave off, I feel a more lively gratification, than I used to experience in the world after conversing with some celebrated man, or a beautiful and accomplished woman."

I had nothing else to reply but, "Then continue, continue;—and praised be Providence, who daily gives me in you the consoling proof, that man can be great anywhere, and always more by the heart than by the intellect."

Thanks to the charitable attentions of Confalonieri, the Colonel progressively improved: his ideas became clearer, his opinions more moderate, his hatred less vehement. He congratulated himself upon this, when an unexpected event all at once destroyed the fruits of so many months' tranquillity and intimacy. This was the return of Don Stephano.

The long winter had now passed; Easter approached: the envoy of the Emperor arrived, and one of his first acts was to send for Moretti, whom he had not yet seen. Their interviews were frequent, and at first unaccompanied by discussion or any evil results. This good understanding soon gave way to the most lively altercations; and the Colonel, who reported each conference to us, at last said one day, "That man, I am convinced, is a Judas under a priest's garments. Would you believe it? he pretends that I am guilty, and declares that he will never admit me to the offices of religion, unless I first confess that I have conspired against the Emperor. In vain have I appealed to his toleration, to his sense of justice; in vain have I supplicated him to hear my defence. He insists that I am but too happy in having escaped the scaffold. Then he tells me that I shall certainly perish in Spielberg, if I do not bow my head, and seek by repentance to merit some remission of my punishment. Is this fulfilling the mission of peace and reconciliation entrusted to a minister of the Gospel? Ought I to find in an ecclesiastic a worthy second to that execrable Salvotti? I see how it is; they are all conspiring against me, and I must sink under their persecutions."

I did all in my power to calm Moretti, and persuade him that he was perhaps deceived; but his irritation increased at every interview, and he again repeated, "Don Stephano, I am positive, is the agent of the Emperor, to whom all means are alike to gain his ends. I know him of old. Distrust this gentleman in black: he is not the apostle of Christ, but an emissary of Beelzebub. He is the cause of all our ills; through him, and him alone, shall I leave my bones in Spielberg."

From henceforward the "gentleman in black" became the one idea in Moretti's mind; his head wandered more than ever, and he often shouted, "How shall I escape, since the devil continually sends against me the wickedest of his agents?"

In my turn I was sent for by Don Stéphano. "I have rendered a favourable account of you to his Majesty," he said immediately on seeing me. "He is very much satisfied with your conduct; but nevertheless he does not consider you wholly reclaimed, because you have not revealed all that you know of these secret societies and their abominable plots. Listen to me, my son; if you wish us to continue good friends, you must prove your sincerity. Unless you do this, how shall I succeed in removing the ill impression Salvotti has produced against you in the mind of our pious Emperor? His Majesty will visit Italy in a few weeks, and he will not fail to give that Inquisitor several audiences. I have already done much for you, be assured. Our august Sovereign was in the most propitious disposition towards you at my departure; but to act efficiently for you, I want some undeniable pledge of your repentance. You must see that something more than mere protestations will be necessary to counteract the effect of the words of Salvotti. You comprehend me, no doubt? I am better instructed than I was on my first visit here. You know a great many facts; inform me of them, and all will go well. There is a talk of an amnesty, of a general pardon, which the Emperor is going to issue in Italy."

Painfully surprised at this inquisitorial importunity more suitable to an Aulic counsellor than a minister of

Christ, I replied to Don Stephano Paolowitz, by again protesting that I had done nothing in Lombardy against the safety of the state.

"But you may against other states; and that is of import to his Majesty. Besides which, your frankness will only be in his eyes an act of submission.—Remember!"

"I can add nothing," I replied, "to what I have already said on this point, sir."

He continued to press me; but I preserved silence, and he was at last forced to keep in the limits of his functions. It was easy, however, to see that Don Stephano expected a different result, as he continually exclaimed in the midst of his exhortations, "'T is unheard of—incredible!—I was well assured at Vienna—You will ruin yourself, my son, by your blindness, your obstinacy!—The irons that encumber your legs, those garments of a convict, you will long, long wear—perhaps for ever!—while, if—"

"Have you not yourself told me, sir, that He who died for us on the cross was the God of the unfortunate and the suffering, and that He will not forget me, if I support my calamities with patience?"

"Doubtless, doubtless; but our Saviour does not require us to sacrifice ourselves uselessly. It is contrary to the laws of Providence. I should be wiser were I in your place."

"In my place, sir, you would, like me, deplore the fatal prejudices which possess the mind of his Majesty, and leave it to our Father in Heaven one day to open the eyes and touch the heart of the powerful monarch, whose throne is too elevated, and whose attention is too

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much taken up by the interests of his subjects for him to deign to occupy himself with us. He thinks no more of the prisoners of state, after the law has once pronounced their doom, excepting to shower on them the beneficent effects of his clemency."

The cheeks of Don Stephano reddened slightly. His eyes were fixed upon me with an expression of mortified vanity, and he replied, with that air of importance which a man assumes when he wishes to give weight to his words, "The mind of his Majesty is vast enough, and his heart sufficiently generous, to take an interest in the fate of each of the lost sheep of his innumerable flock. I repeat to you that everything concerning the prisoners of Spielberg is reserved for his own peculiar and infinite goodness. No one dares to interfere with them, not even Prince Metternich. I know this better than any one, for his Majesty, in our last interview, deigned to reiterate to me, 'In this affair, you understand, you will have to do with me alone.'

"As a proof of this," continued Don Stephano, led on by the desire of convincing me and of vaunting himself, "as a proof, I have received orders from our august Sovereign's own lips, to forward the reports he has commanded me to prepare on each of the captives in Spielberg, during his journey to Italy, directly to himself."

Don Stephano drew himself up as he pronounced these words; then, after a momentary silence, he said, "Well! you see your fate depends not a little upon me."

"I see also," I replied, "that, in placing this confidence in a servant of the God of mercy, the Emperor has been desirous of affording us the consoling assurance that indulgence and clemency, henceforth, will alone obtain access to his heart."

"Certainly, certainly: that is exactly how you must understand it; but it is written also that the pastor alone cannot effect the salvation of the sinner."

Without entirely adopting the exaggerated opinions of Colonel Moretti, respecting the character and conduct of Don Paolowitz, we were, to our great grief, sufficiently convinced that the redemption of souls, the first duty, the only aim of a good confessor, was with him subordinate to the wish of pleasing the Sovereign who had sent him to us. Day after day presented fresh confirmation that the will of the Emperor was uppermost in his thoughts; that, however irreproachable our conduct might be, we had everything to fear from him.

Don Stephano, slightly versed as he was in the art of dissimulating his designs and intentions, had already made us aware, by his continual questionings, his inquiries as to the internal management of the prison, our occupations, and our relations to each other, that he did not intend to confine his despatches to the Emperor entirely to spiritual matters. Hence, it was necessary for us to renounce the hope of receiving from him the consolations so efficacious to the unfortunate, when administered by those who work in the spirit of faith, love, and charity. We said to each other, in the words of the prophet, "In God alone let us place our trust; Him alone do we serve."

CHAPTER IX.

THE Emperor's journey to Milan, of which we had been apprised by Don Paolowitz, had strongly awakened the hopes of the relatives and friends of the unfortunate men confined in Spielberg and Laybach. Every one, on learning that his Majesty had decided on visiting a city where so many families were plunged in grief, concluded that it was with the intention of proclaiming a general pardon. The happy news, flying from mouth to mouth, diffused universal joy throughout Italy, and extended even to France.

My father being at the time too ill to leave Paris, or dispense with the attentions of my brother, entrusted to my sister the care of braving everything to restore me to his arms. She accordingly departed for Milan, to implore my release from the Emperor; and she again kept a diary of her journey, from which I extract the following passages.

" *Villeneuve-le-Roi, April 28th,* 1825.—My heart was bursting this morning as I embraced my husband and father-in-law, and assured them that I would do all in my power to merit the confidence reposed in me. The carriage drove up, and I hastened to get into it and shorten the anguish of parting. As we drove past the towers of Notre-Dame the sun was shining upon them brilliantly. They seemed to pour down a radiance to guide and enlighten me on my long journey.

"*Geneva, May 1st.*—From the bottom of my heart did I return thanks to Heaven on coming within sight of this city. I hailed it as the spot where my poor brother commenced a new career, so worthy of esteem that scarcely the excess of his misfortune can make us regret the past. After having wandered about the town for some time, we found ourselves in the street in which he had resided for three years, at a confectioner's, one Madame Metton, who had treated him with great kindness. I soon observed the unassuming little shop, and entered it to purchase some pastry. On my telling the good lady that I was M. Andryane's sister, she insisted on showing me the apartment he had occupied. Leading the way, she took us up a staircase so dark and narrow that we could hardly conceive it to lead to a room. Josephine, sighing, said to me in a whisper, 'Poor Alexander! Ah, if his father saw this!' We at last entered a little chamber, very neatly furnished, but in every respect so humble, that I could not help exclaiming, 'What! was this his room?'

"Madame Metton begged us to sit down, and sobbed. 'Unfortunate young man! Here did he work twelve or fourteen hours a-day. He never gave any trouble. I am a poor woman; if I were but a fine lady, and knew how to talk, I would go and pray to that Emperor of Austria for him.'

"When I told the good Madame Metton that I was going thither, she loaded me with blessings, and made me promise to call as I passed through Geneva on my return, to give her an account of my journey.

"*Simplon, Wednesday, May 6th.*—Just at nightfall we have arrived at the summit of the Simplon, one of the most remarkable mountains in the Alps. It is difficult to conceive how the genius of man could effect a passage through these masses of rock, which literally lose themselves in the clouds. How the contemplation of these grand works of Nature elevates the mind! How delightful it is to put ourselves under the protection of Heaven, and feel that we have nothing to fear, but all to hope!

"*Milan, Sunday, May 8th.*—We are at length at the end of our journey, and it seems like a dream to me. That I should again be in this town, the scene of so many tears, of so much suffering! We slept at about eight leagues from Milan, and stopped this morning at a pretty village to hear mass. I was much struck by the words in the gospel of the day: 'Whatsoever thou askest of me in prayer shall be given thee.' With confidence my heart accepted the precious promise: coming just at the close of my journey, this appeared an omen that God will bless it.

"*Tuesday, May 10th.*—I have this morning paid a visit to our ambassador, Monsieur de Caraman, and to Count Pactha. At the house of the latter I was shown into the little room so well known to me. I seated myself on the same sofa on which I was when informed of the sentence passed on my poor brother, and of its commutation. What harrowing emotions I had suffered there! My heart now recalled them all; nevertheless, not a tear nor a murmur escaped me. Whatever is the will of Heaven must be accomplished!

"Count Pactha received me with the same kindness and attention which his former behaviour had led me to expect. He gives a very satisfactory account of Alexander's health, much approves of my journey, and affords me some hopes of success.

"I then waited on the Military Governor of Lombardy, General Count Bubna, to whom I was unknown. Having found him too much engaged to admit me, I handed my letters of introduction to his valet. I had scarcely returned to my lodgings when the General sent one of his aides-de-camp to apologize for not having received me, and to ask permission to call upon me himself tomorrow morning.

"At six o'clock this evening the Emperor and Empress made their entry in great state. It had been so often repeated to me that the event of his Majesty's dispensing pardons would greatly depend on the reception he met with, that I determined to be an unobserved witness.

"Seated in a room of the Saporiti Palace, on the Corso of Porta Orientale, we all three obtained a distinct view of the royal pair. They were in a state-carriage drawn by eight horses, and surmounted by the crown. When I saw that angelic woman, to whom the Countess Confalonieri and myself owe so much, my eyes filled with tears. But on observing the Emperor my heart beat violently, and I whispered to myself, 'On the will of that old man depends the existence of my poor brother; in his powerful hands rests not only our happiness, but that of how many other unfortunate men!' Overcome by my feelings, I wept bitterly, and saw no more of what was passing around me.

" *Wednesday, May* 11*th.*—I have had a long conversation this morning with General Bubna. He gives very little hope; but, if his advice should prevail, all will be pardoned. I felt reanimated by this news; but I was soon discouraged by hearing that when the uncle of Confalonieri, who formed one of the deputation of the city to the Emperor, asked for the release of his nephew, his Majesty at first appeared angry, and at last answered that the Count was anything but reclaimed, and he could not, for the sake of one man, endanger the tranquillity of all.

" *Thursday, May* 19*th.*—This has been a fortunate day to me, and the unexpected happiness it has brought with it will never be effaced from my memory. Learning from M. de Caraman this morning that Prince Metternich would receive me, if I called upon him, I immediately proceeded to his house, invoking Heaven to inspire me with words which should touch him. Encouraged by the kindness which beamed from the Prince's countenance, I presented myself before him without the least embarrassment, and said in a tone which came from my soul, 'I have recourse to your Highness, as to a superior being. I am sent by my family to fulfil a sacred mission. I am here without guidance, without support: may I conjure you to afford me yours? Will you interest yourself for a poor heartbroken woman, who relies upon you?'

"The Prince took me by the hand, and led me to a seat by his side, when I added, 'You were in Paris a few months ago, but I could not have the honour of seeing you there. Myself as well as my husband being confined to our country-seat by the illness of my father, we were compelled to forgo the hope of obtaining your intercession on behalf of our brother.'

"'But you had a father, madam, a devoted friend, who, while he made a most affecting and honourable appeal to me, did not leave me in ignorance of your merit. The Archbishop of Paris, in applying to me, like a shepherd for the restoration of his sheep, has inspired me with so much interest for you, madam, and even for your brother, that I have considered it my bounden duty to render the most exact account to his Majesty of an application so truly worthy of a minister of God.'

"I expressed to the Prince all my gratitude for this, and stated my desire of seeing the Emperor.

"'He can only repeat to you, madam, what I had foreseen when I said what I did to the Archbishop of Paris.'

"'Alas! is not, then, the hour of mercy yet arrived?'

"'It cannot be yet, madam. The goodness of the Emperor must yield to the imperious necessity of making an example. Be consoled, however, by the assurance I give you, that whenever your brother may be restored to society, it will be as a man inspired with the deepest sentiments of religion, and the strictest principles of honour.'

"'That he has always been, your Highness: his heart has ever been good and virtuous, though, like other young men, he was sometimes led astray.'

"'The Emperor, knowing that you were here, madam, and that I was about to see you, commanded me to assure you that you ought to be thoroughly satisfied, for your brother is entirely reconciled with God.'

"An exclamation of joy, which escaped me, was remarked by the Prince, and he added with earnestness, 'His Majesty, though unable to restore him to society, would at least restore him to the bosom of the Church. He has placed an ecclesiastic near him, a man of very great worth, to teach him the truths of religion, of which your brother was deplorably ignorant, and the good priest renders the most favourable accounts of him.'

"'God be thanked for all his mercies!' I exclaimed, and burst into tears.

"'I have promised the Archbishop of Paris, madam,' continued the Prince, 'to use all my interest for you, and be assured that I will keep my word. The Duke of Angoulême has also strongly spoken to me in your brother's behalf; and, doubtless, his support would have had great weight with the Emperor, if France could have been allowed to interfere in the matter. But it is the maxim of our Sovereign always to be master in his own realms, and not suffer any potentate in Europe to intrude upon what passes within them.'

"My interview with Prince Metternich having lasted more than three-quarters of an hour, it was time for me to depart. I returned home overcome by his kindness, and consoled by the unexpected news which he gave me.

"*Saturday, May* 21*st.*—For several days I had been expecting, hour after hour, the pleasure of seeing the Countess Confalonieri. I had sent her a note soon after my arrival, stating the extreme desire I felt to meet her, and adding that she could indicate the means to be adopted by sending Carlo to San Fedele, where Josephine would be at nine o'clock each morning.

"Only yesterday Theresa wrote me word that today she would herself be at San Celso, in the furthest part of the town. I had hardly entered and knelt down, when she was by my side. We were alone: she made a sign to me, and I followed her behind the grand altar, where the sanctity of the place alone restrained the impulse of my heart to clasp her in my arms. But, good God, how she is changed! Sorrow has furrowed all her features, and effected dreadful ravages on a countenance still exquisitely beautiful in its dignified resignation.

"'How rejoiced I am to see you again,' she said, 'I so much longed for it! When I tell you the fresh misfortune which has happened to me you will understand why I could not meet you earlier. Come to me tomorrow about dusk, for you know we must be prudent.'

"I ardently look forward to seeing her again. Isolated as I am from all protecting ties, my loneliness seems to increase my attachment to her.

"*Sunday, May* 22*nd.*—I have at last seen Theresa, have mingled my tears with hers, and given a free course to all the sentiments of tenderness and admiration with which she inspires me. The first moments of mutual joy being past, I found, to my cruel disappointment, that she had received no news of our unhappy captives. 'What!' I cried, 'after the lapse of so many months, you know nothing of their fate?'

"'Nothing whatever. When I went to Vienna, in September, I had hoped to be permitted to fix my residence at Brünn; but the Emperor refused this, as well as every mitigation of my poor husband's punishment. Inexorable to all my prayers, he did not so much as leave me a shadow of hope, that even when long years might have elapsed he would relent. All I gained by my journey was the frightful certainty, that they are subjected to the horrible regulations of the convicts, loaded with irons, and deprived of all but the most wretched food.'

"Heavens!' I cried, 'what do you tell me? you have dissipated a great illusion! Religion and humanity are alike outraged by the infliction of such sufferings. Why did you not endeavour to see the confessor of the Emperor, and through that channel attempt at least to inform him of the truth?'

"'He already knows it all. Nothing is done unless the order emanates from himself. Besides, his confessor is unknown; he changes often, and always selects some poor village priest, whom he sends for without previous intimation, and without allowing him to suspect why the honour is conferred. This system the Emperor adopts, never to have any one about his person who by his functions might conceive the idea of influencing or setting bounds to his authority.'

" 'And what do you hope to accomplish during the stay of the monarch in Milan?'

" 'No change; all my hopes and efforts are now concentrated in the imperative necessity of secretly mitigating their horrible captivity. If this cannot be effected, let us dismiss every hope that they can long sustain so rigorous a punishment. God will grant it, I trust, to the fervour of my prayers, and the perseverance of my attempts. This is the one aim of my life, in which, day and night, all my faculties are absorbed. Do not fear, my dear friend, that the failure of my plans will ever produce discouragement. Reassure yourself by the promise I made, and renew to you, that I will never separate Alexander from my Frederick.'

" 'And how can you hope that you, alone and unaided, will be able to surmount difficulties almost incalculable?'

" 'Ah,' said she, bursting into tears, 'you do not know what fresh loss was reserved for me! An incomparable friend, who encouraged and consoled me, has been called to Heaven within these few days. My beloved Matilda Dembowsky—that angelic woman, who united an adorable sensitiveness with an energy which rendered her capable of actions the most sublime—is dead! Nothing was equal to her devotion to Frederick and myself. Her death would have left me without any solace upon earth, since that of retaining you in Milan is not permitted me, if I did not also yet possess another friend not less devoted than Matilda. We all three formed but one soul, of which the noblest part is snatched away from us. The inconsolable friend who still remains to me, the Countess Frecavalli, desires to see you; it will soothe her lacerated heart. Will you refuse her?'

"'Oh, no!' I replied warmly; 'at this moment she has a claim on all my sympathy: I shall be most happy to assure her of it.'

"It was then agreed that Theresa should fix the place and time for my meeting the Countess Frecavalli. It is our custom every evening to take a drive round the delightful suburbs of the city, and on arriving at any inviting spot, to alight from the carriage, and stroll away from it, often to some distance. Nothing could be easier than to arrange an interview with the Countess in one of these rambles, which are nearly always solitary. I left Theresa with a heavy heart. How little did I know of the frightful truth prior to her details!

"*Monday, May 30th.*—Another week has passed away, and our situation is still unaltered: I have in vain expected day by day the promise of an audience, but none has been conceded. The Emperor has appeared satisfied by the rejoicings which have succeeded each other during these eight days. He has this morning departed for Genoa: I must await his return in patience.

"*Sunday, June 5th.*—Time passes on and still nothing effected! General Bubna is very ill; his life is despaired of. The Emperor treated him with great harshness on the eve of his departure for Genoa, and placed him under arrest. To place such an old servant, the Governor of Lombardy, under arrest! and this, 't is said, merely because he warmly interceded for the prisoners at Spielberg. Whatever be the motive of this severity, it will be fatal to him; the gout has flown to the chest, and nothing but a miracle can save him.

"*Monday, June 6th.*—General Bubna expired yesterday. I deeply regret him; for I owed much to him already, and I doubt not he would have effected more in my favour had he lived. The Countess Confalonieri has in him lost a powerful advocate and most devoted friend. From the commencement of her troubles, not a day has elapsed without his calling upon her. His loss is irreparable to us: no one else will dare to speak the truth to the Emperor as Count Bubna was accustomed to do.

"*Tuesday, June 7th.*—A note from Theresa this morning appointed me to repair to the cemetery by the side of the canal at seven o'clock in the evening. We therefore took our drive at the usual hour, and on arriving near the spot we alighted and walked down towards the banks of the canal, taking our books and work, as we frequently did. Directly we had gone far enough to preclude being observed from the carriage, I repaired to the cemetery alone, and sitting at the foot of the cross, which stood in the midst of this asylum of repose, I remained several moments absorbed in sad musings, when the Countess Frecavalli appeared.

"On seeing her advance towards me I affectionately extended my hand; she took it, and said with much warmth, 'I am glad to meet you at last: I have quite longed to become acquainted with the devoted sister of one of the miserable victims of Spielberg,—of him whom every really Italian heart ought to weep for and love.'

"'You are indeed too kind!' said I, folding her in my arms; 'thanks for the poor prisoner. But let us leave this gloomy spot,—Come!'

"'No; let me sit down by you: I am better here than elsewhere, and, I am sure, your heart harmonizes with the feelings which these tombs inspire.'

"'I know but too well your own griefs; how deeply you feel the loss of your incomparable friend, Matilda—'

"An imperative gesture commanded silence, and as the Countess covered her face with her hands the words died away on my lips.

"'Do not pronounce that name!' she said after a few minutes' silence, which I dared not interrupt; 'do not pronounce it until I shall have spoken to you about her,—if I ever should gain fortitude to acquaint you with all that I have lost.'

"The Countess half terrified me; and I should perhaps have had difficulty in overcoming my embarrassment, if she had not spoken of Confalonieri with that loftiness of sentiment which had already excited my admiration, when my brother in speaking of him attempted to inspire me with all he himself felt. The Countess Frecavalli's expressions were full of warmth and energy, and displayed the most devoted attachment. To give her life for Theresa and her unhappy husband would have been a joy.

"'I have long felt,' I said to her, 'that one who inspires in his friends this fanatical enthusiasm which braves all sacrifices, cannot but be a being of glorious pre-eminence, in whom the whole nation ought to rejoice. I was informed, during my first residence in Milan, of all that you braved for him and his cause; that you had been confined to your own house for three months by order of the Commission; that they inflicted an infinity of tortures on you, for the purpose of extorting some avowal on which to condemn your unhappy friends.'

"'Ah, there is nothing to praise in that,' she answered; 'I did but fulfil my duty. Happy should I have been, ten times happy, to lay down my life in order to save theirs, or this moment release them from the horrors of Spielberg.'

"We talked long of the rare virtues of Theresa, and of the unbounded grief she will give way to if unable to save her husband. The Countess Frecavalli places so little reliance on the imperial mercy that she has filled me with discouragement. My soul is sick, even unto death.

"After promising to meet again in eight days, we parted. I quitted her with the persuasion that her devotedness and impassioned love for her country surpass all I ever could have imagined, and render her capable of the most heroic resolutions.

"*Wednesday, June 8th.*—I have received the most distressing news from Paris: my father-in-law is very ill,—my husband in despair; but for the sacred duty which detains me here I would instantly return home.

"*Sunday, June 12th.*—The Emperor having returned yesterday evening, I went this morning to our Ambassador, and then to Prince Metternich, who received me with great kindness and politeness; he has very much raised my hopes again by informing me that the Emperor is better disposed in my favour. He said also, 'I shall this evening inquire the orders of his Majesty respecting you, and tomorrow night, or at the latest next morning, I promise you a reply. I shall be delighted to hear the result of your interview with his Majesty. Call and give me an account of it, I entreat you.'

"Prince Metternich then turned his attention to the petition I proposed to present to the Emperor; and pointed out the different passages which would be likely to affect or displease his Majesty."

CHAPTER X.

"*TUESDAY, June 14th.*—Tomorrow the Emperor gives audience, and doubtless it will also be the day of my reception. I was this evening so agitated by the thoughts of it, that I did not feel very eager to attend the appointment I had with the Countess Frecavalli. I trembled lest her incredulity should again chill my hopes; but the excellent woman saw how necessary it was to respect them, and she did not utter a single word of discouragement.

"'I have not forgotten,' said I, 'that you made me a promise to speak about that Matilda whom you mourn so bitterly.'

"'Oh yes; I will tell you what an irreparable loss Theresa and myself have to deplore, and you will judge whether I can ever sufficiently lament that woman, who was a model for mothers, as well as the most perfect of friends. She died at the early age of thirty-five,—died in my arms,—still in the bloom of health and beauty, and just when everything seemed to promise that she would be preserved for her two sons, whom she idolized. But she also loved the glory of her country and the men who aspired to make it illustrious, and she suffered so much from its unmerited debasement, and the loss of her friends, that her constitution was shattered. And yet, what goodness, what angelic sweetness possessed her noble heart! what attentions she lavished on her children! how devoted she was to her husband, whom she accompanied throughout all his campaigns in Spain and Italy! In December, 1822, she was arrested at midnight, in the open street, as she returned home from a party. The next morning she was brought before the Inquisitorial Commission, and underwent an examination of ten hours. In the course of this, Salvotti, in derision of the dignity of her replies, ironically inquired whether she fancied herself still in the midst of the Carbonari over whom she presided. 'No!' was her answer, 'but in the midst of the Inquisition of Venice.' Then protesting against the brutal violence offered to a weak woman, she declared she would reply to no further questions, and Salvotti found himself obliged to set her free. A feeling of general indignation awarded justice both to the judge and the accused. Though subjected to endless vexations from the police, her zeal in behalf of our unfortunate exiles and the prisoners at Spielberg never faltered, and she was deservedly entitled the Niobe of her friends.'

"In thanking the Countess Frecavalli for having taught me to know and regret a woman so admirable, I could not restrain my tears. Her ardent and dauntless spirit might have rescued our unhappy captives. What a loss to Theresa! how I feel for her!

"*Wednesday, June 15th.*—In vain I expected my letter of audience during this whole morning: none arrived. My inquietude and impatience were extreme, when at six o'clock I received the following note from our Ambassador: 'Prince Metternich has requested me to inform Madame Andryane that the Emperor will grant her a private interview, and that she shall be apprised beforehand of the day and hour. This proof of the benevolence of his Majesty appears to me a most favourable augury; and I am happy to announce it to Madame Andryane.'—This letter has filled me with hope and joy. A private audience is, I hear, so great a favour, that I know not how to set bounds to my expectations.

" *Sunday, June* 19*th.*—I am still waiting. My hopes seem to gather fresh strength as the decisive moment approaches. The Prussian ambassador mentioned to Prince B——, who repeated it to me as a great secret, that the Emperor intends to grant a free pardon to many of the condemned at the moment of his departure. Our Consul came and told me that M. de Caraman had assured him that something will certainly be done for Alexander.

"*Monday, June* 20*th.*—His Majesty leaves Milan on Thursday. Fearing lest I should not be received, I wrote this morning to Prince Metternich. In his reply, he begs me to make myself perfectly easy; and I am so, though it would take but little to destroy my reliance. I even persuade myself that the Emperor will receive me at the very last moment, in order to console me by some happy news. I nevertheless should not dare to give way to such expectations, if I did not trust in the goodness of God to sustain me in case of disappointment.

"*Wednesday, June 22nd.*—I was informed this morning by Prince Metternich that his Majesty will see me tomorrow, an hour before his departure. With this upon my mind, I know not how I should have whiled away the day, had not a most delightful circumstance occurred. I had gone out at nine o'clock to tell M. de Caraman that my audience was fixed for tomorrow, and I afterwards called on Count Pactha. Whilst I was with him, one of his secretaries came in, and spoke to him in German; upon which the Count, turning to me with a smile, said, 'He whom you reverence as a father, the Archbishop of Paris, has just arrived in Milan on his way to Rome.'

"'Ah! he has been sent by Heaven,' I cried with a feeling of deep gratitude; and scarcely taking leave of Count Pactha, who was much rejoiced at my delight, I proceeded as fast as possible to the *Croce di Malta*, where I was told his Grace had alighted. He had been gone out some time to Prince Metternich's, and it was uncertain when he would return. After leaving a letter for him, I came home, where I found my daughter and Josephine, transported with joy. They had seen the Archbishop: he had awaited my return nearly half an hour, then promised to call again, without however fixing the time. The worthy man had been so kind and so merry to my Louise, that she was still in a flush of pleasure.

"With the expectation of this visit, the day has seemed of an interminable length. Towards the evening, the Archbishop made his appearance, and though I felt delighted at finding him extremely kind, yet I was much grieved on seeing him very ill and profoundly melancholy. He exhorted me to resignation, as it was his firm belief that I should obtain nothing. Alas! he had just left the Emperor, and doubtless he knew something of his Majesty's intentions. His words have dissipated my illusions: my hopes are annihilated. After having wished us farewell, and given us his blessing, he said to me in a most touching tone, 'Perhaps we are destined never to meet again upon earth!'

"I could only reply to him by my tears. This day has harassed me out. During this short space, I have undergone too much joy and too much affliction for my strength. On hearing this morning of the arrival of him to whom I owe so much, I thought God had sent him to be the instrument of his divine mercy, and the author of our happiness. Only a few hours have passed,—all my hopes are destroyed, and I have seen this good father worn out by illness and sorrow. It is too much, O Lord, unless thou comest to my aid!

"*Thursday, June 23rd.*—I give thanks to Providence that I was yesterday prepared for this cruel deception. Six weeks of the most wearing agitation and anxiety have ended in absolutely nothing. All the early part of the day, the thought of the great event about to take place was torturing; the latter part is more wretched than it is possible to conceive. On putting on this black dress for the first time, I was pierced with anguish, and at once felt that mourning was my lot. The monarch's departure was imminent, and an immense crowd already filled the square, the court, and the portico. After crossing several deserted saloons, I found the Chamberlain-in-waiting in the one next to the Emperor's cabinet. The palpitation of my heart almost choked me; but God heard my secret prayer, for all emotion had disappeared when the door opened and I was invited to enter.

"After having made the three obeisances required, I advanced with my head respectfully inclined, and said without embarrassment, 'In obtaining the honour of seeing your Majesty, my first duty is to offer you thanks in the name of a grateful family, who owe all to you. But for your infinite clemency, Sire, my brother would have ceased to exist, and we should have been miserable for ever.'

"A faint voice replied, 'I am delighted, I am delighted.'

"Raising my eyes, I beheld before me a little old man, of about my own height, without any dignity or appearance of grace, and with a long countenance,—so long! He was dressed in a travelling suit, without any decorations. I told him how, in consequence of the illness of my father-in-law, I had been sent thither myself: then expressing my apprehension that my poor brother might never see his aged parent again, I fell on my knees before him.

"The Emperor started back, apparently frightened, and answered sharply, raising his voice, 'Arise, get up, get up! If I had known you came to ask his pardon, I would not have received you. I cannot grant it, my duty forbids me. Unless I make a striking example of this case, I shall soon have more of these rascals come and create disturbances here. If any more Frenchmen come, they shall certainly be hanged. Your brother ought to have been hanged.'

"I was so overwhelmed with astonishment at such language, that I burst out weeping bitterly, and reiterated my prayers for pardon; for it was necessary not to abandon submission when it was so needful. I said in vain to the Emperor everything my heart or mind could suggest. He was not accessible on any side: his only reply was, 'Be at ease; I have taken care of his soul; but it is contrary to my duty to grant his liberty. You must wait till the scoundrels who sent your brother into Lombardy have ceased to exist,—they are old.'

"'Sire, I supplicate you, grant us permission to write to him sometimes.'

"'Impossible, impossible! it is contrary to the regulations.'

"'But the letters need not be put into his hands. Your Majesty might deign to order that they should be read to him.'

"'Impossible, impossible!' he replied.

"'Sire, in the name of a dying father, in the name of Heaven's mercy, do not refuse to a family in despair the one satisfaction of once a year seeing his signature, —only his signature, Sire, to convince us that he is alive.'

"'Impossible, impossible!'

"My sobs, which I could not control for some instants, prevented utterance: at last I said, 'If he could but undergo his captivity in France, he would be permitted to see us sometimes.'

"'I cannot put sufficient trust in France to grant that,' answered the Emperor, touching me on the shoulder and smiling: 'no, no! I cannot put that trust in France; you are still too feverish there.'

"'Then shall I have no consolation to carry to his father, whom grief is hurrying to the tomb?'

"'You may tell him that his son will be a very honest man when again restored to society, that we take as much care of the soul as of the body of the prisoner, and that he goes on well in every respect. I have given him as a companion to Confalonieri: they love each other, and are always together, except when they are punished; then we separate them for three weeks or a month. I have just received a letter from the priest, whom I send to Spielberg four times a year. He writes to me that I should do nothing for either of them yet, as they are not sufficiently corrected.'

"My tears redoubled, and I cried out in accents of despair, 'Alas! we shall never see him again.'

"'Yes, yes, you will see him again,—I promise it,—I give you my word for it. When I return to Vienna, I will consider what I can do to alleviate their fate. If they are good, I will be merciful,—for, understand me, it depends upon that.'

"My audience had lasted forty minutes without any result, yet the Emperor did not dismiss me; but he said, 'After you, I shall receive the governor of Lombardy, Strassoldo, and I will give him orders to transmit to you every six months a bulletin of your brother's health.'

"I then took leave. My eyes were so dimmed with tears, that I traversed the saloons without seeing anything around, though an immense crowd blocked up the passage. As soon as I got into my carriage, I hastened to lower the blinds, that I might at least weep without restraint. My daughter and Josephine awaited me on the staircase; they read our sentence in the disorder of my features, and we all three gave a free vent to our tears. Tomorrow we shall be more resigned, I hope: God will not abandon us.

" *Friday, June 24th.*—I am more calm today,—I can reason. Having decided on quitting this town, where I have suffered so much, I went to take leave of Count Pactha. Before him I was in no dread lest I should betray the feelings which oppressed my heart; but on visiting Prince Metternich, though I manifested my grief, it was without any appearance of discontent. How necessary it is to dissimulate!

" 'I had forewarned you, madam,' said the Prince, 'that you would gain no comfort from an interview with his Majesty. From his position, he could not have acted otherwise. I beg of you therefore wholly to forget what he has said to you, retaining only the recollection of the promise, that he will one day restore your brother to the world.'

"At six o'clock I went to take a last adieu of the Countess Confalonieri, as I had arranged with her. My tears again began to flow on seeing her. Alas! once more our destiny has been the same: the Emperor has been as inexorable to me as to her. We spent four hours together, and they seemed to me hours of happiness, in spite of the sorrow which was at our hearts. She is an angel of virtue and goodness. While she interests by her deep sensibility, she overcomes and astonishes by the energy of her soul, and the elevation of her sentiments. She has promised me a chain of her beautiful hair, braided by her own hands expressly for me. She repeated to me a hundred times that she never would separate the fate of the two captives. As I listened in reverential silence to her enthusiasm, it seemed impossible but that all obstacles must be conquered by the force of her will and perseverance. I again dare to hope, I see them delivered by her exertions!

"'In my dreams of happiness,' said she, '—for I do indulge in them sometimes,—I transport myself with my Frederick to some little nook in France, near where you, my dear friend, reside with your Alexander, whom I have every reason to love, though I have not even the pleasure of his acquaintance. Meanwhile, let us be united by the common ties of affection and devotedness,—united in prayer, for in this also I would not separate those whom I always couple together in my wishes to do them good.'

"On quitting Theresa, I felt that I had not yet experienced all the sorrows of which the human soul is susceptible. Shall I ever see her again? Alas! it will never be in my power to show her my gratitude and the extent of my attachment;—I can do nothing for her poor husband, while she may become the angel of deliverance to my brother. May it please Heaven to shower its choicest blessings upon her!"

CHAPTER XI.

While our relatives, after having for a moment given way to hope, fell back into distress and discouragement; while my sister, after so much fatigue and anxiety, had only gained the conviction of the inexorable character of him on whom alone my fate depended, we were employed in fulfilling the duties of religion, or in pursuing our studies.

I would have given anything for the pleasure of being able to preserve and publish the letters of my beloved Pellico; but I was obliged to destroy those precious testimonials of wisdom, sensibility, and love, as soon as they had been perused. Their tender and penetrating expressions bore the stamp of a heart which God had hallowed.

Poor Silvio! he suffered dreadfully. His life seemed flickering into extinction; and yet he still raised his voice to bless the Lord, and pour forth hymns full of emotion and holy poetry. Still did he infuse balm into the wounds of his companions, teaching them resignation by his example, and encouraging them in their literary labours. We all worked; and if some were not inspired with a passion for writing, all at least took an interest in the compositions projected or undertaken by the others. Accordingly the conversations of our captive colony turned one while on the verses of Pellico, Maroncelli, or Borsieri, at another upon the progress of a treatise on ideology by Monari. Sometimes a profound letter of Confalonieri on a question of morals or philosophy would set our thinking faculties to work; and sometimes trifles which I myself wrote engaged the attention of my companions.

The enjoyment which flowed from this interchange of thought and brotherly feeling became daily more necessary and profitable to us. We redoubled our efforts and industry to overcome the difficulties with which we were surrounded, and to remedy the paucity of our writing materials. We stimulated the zealous ingenuity of the daring Caliban, and he had recourse to the most subtle schemes to provide us with what was to us as precious as food,—pens and paper. His devotedness and address, however, were far from satisfying the demand, which increased in proportion with the communication of our ideas.

What we were to do to obviate this deficiency set our inventive powers to work. Every means had been successively exhausted. The blank leaves, the margins and even the covers, of our books were all gone. The scraps of paper which Caliban picked up and triumphantly brought us, afforded but a poor resource. Whole days passed without our being enabled to write a line. We were menaced with an entire suspension of correspondence, and of all composition whatever.

Night and day our minds were on the rack to invent some expedient: we were almost on the point of giving way to despair, when Maroncelli hit upon the means of rendering brown paper fit to supply our want.

Vainly had we long attempted to make it serviceable. It would not allow the pen to glide, and it imbibed the ink like a sponge. Everything that we wrote upon it immediately became an illegible blot. Trial after trial had failed, and at last we abandoned the scheme as impracticable.

Maroncelli, more persevering, at length succeeded. Nothing could equal the joy with which I received a letter from him, written on this coarse paper.

"Behold, my friends," it said, "the difficulty is overcome. The pen runs freely; the ink does not spread. At first I rubbed the paper again and again,—rubbed it till my arms ached,—in the hope of rendering it more compact and smooth by friction; but despite all my pains, it would not take the ink. The idea struck me at last that it was size that it wanted. Accordingly I dissolved some crumbs of bread in our jug of water, and steeped several slips of the paper in this infusion during the night. This morning I dried and then rubbed them perfectly smooth with the back of my wooden spoon; after which I took my pen, and distinctly traced on one of them these words: 'Praised be the Lord, our God, for that he is good, and hath taken pity on us!'

"Succeeding attempts have been even more satisfactory. Try it, my friends, by immediately writing one of your affectionate letters upon the slips which I send you herewith.

"Presuming that this new source of delight, in increasing our means, would also increase our needs, I thought it adviseable, on account of the time consumed by the operation of smoothing, to adopt the system of the division of labour in our paper manufactory; and I begged our excellent Don Marco, who never writes, and whose arms are still of the strongest, to undertake the hotpressing the sheets which I size. He immediately accepted the office. 'I undertake it with the greatest pleasure,' he cried, 'and I thank God for affording me the blessing of becoming useful to my companions in misfortune.'

"Thus, you see, that everything is in a prosperous train. Every Sunday, as I go to chapel, I will exchange with Don Marco the paper yet unsmoothed for that which he may have manufactured during the week: and I must look to all of you to send me by Caliban every scrap of paper you can."

Great was the joy among the captives at this glorious discovery. Every one applauded, every one thanked its ingenious author; and no one more warmly than myself. I immediately resolved to commence a work which I had long meditated: the greater part of the prisoners, revived in heart and spirit, also took advantage of the new invention; and if the gates of Spielberg had been opened at that period, it might have been justly said that adversity, in affixing its noble stamp on the victims of the cause of Italy, had launched them for ever in a career of intellectual improvement.

Don Stephano Paolowitz, therefore, found them very well prepared to bear firmly the news, that the Emperor, far from having issued a pardon on the occasion of his visit to Milan, had returned more discontented than ever with the prisoners at Spielberg.

"Yes," he said to us, "his sacred Majesty has told me that I had deceived myself about you. I begin to perceive by your behaviour that captivity, instead of leading you to regret your errors, on the contrary has rendered you more obstinate and proud. This must all be altered. We shall find out the causes, depend upon it, and adopt means to bring down this haughtiness of spirit which has arisen among you. And it will be for your own good, for there is henceforth no hope of salvation for your souls but in humility and the utter renunciation of these aberrations of thought."

"I assure you," Don Stephano one day observed to me, "that I have suffered much grief latterly, at Vienna, owing to reproaches about you. They charge me with deceiving them as to your sentiments and conduct. 'Has he made any disclosure?' they inquired. 'Has he given proofs of his repentance by spontaneously revealing what he has seen, what he has heard, what he knows of the secret societies? No:—then what is the use of all the rest? He is still unreclaimed.'"

I was about to make some observations to Don Stephano, when he sharply interrupted me. "If you had been well advised, if you had abandoned your absurd system of denial, his Majesty—he told me as much himself—his Majesty, interested by the good account I have given of you, would have yielded to the prayers and tears of your sister when she threw herself at his feet at Milan."

"My poor sister, my poor sister! how much she must have suffered!"

"Ah, indeed she must, my son, and she will suffer still more deeply if you persist in your silence. Your father too, who is so old and enfeebled."

"In mercy, sir, do not revive the past; my fate is already sufficiently severe, without aggravating it by fresh shocks and more heart-rending regret. For the hundredth time I repeat that I have done nothing in Lombardy hostile to his Majesty's government; I have never conspired against it; the very intention of such a thing was abandoned."

"His Majesty is aware of that," Don Stephano hastily cried; "but what he requires to know is what you did elsewhere."

"Whatever light I might give the Emperor upon this subject would so little answer his expectations, that it is much better for me, sir, to abstain from speaking of circumstances already long dismissed from my thoughts."

"Just as you choose—as you choose! what I tell you is only for your own good. All I can say further is, that carrying the matter with this high hand is not the way by which either you or your fellow-prisoners will gain your liberty."

Being now fully instructed as to the intentions of the Emperor with regard to the prisoners at Spielberg, and of the real purpose of his mission, Don Stephano Paolowitz had unscrupulously determined to please the Sovereign and merit his favours by acting the infamous part of which, thanks to his want of tact, we began to surmise the deplorable results. Persuaded as he at first was of his own cunning and sharp-sightedness, he very soon found that he would be unable to penetrate the secrets of the prison, and learn the character of each captive, unless he was aided by an auxiliary—a spy chosen from those very persons to whom he came to teach the Gospel.

This spy he sought, and unhappily we were led to suspect by some words which escaped him, that there was one among us who had betrayed his brothers in misfortune. Who could it be? We were unable to ascertain; but we could not doubt that Don Stephano, who had as yet been unacquainted with the immense sources of relief we possessed in books, as well as among ourselves, had now gained intelligence of them; for he continually reiterated to us, "Humility, repentance, and prayer, are of far more efficacy to the captive, than any vain craving after learning, which only engenders pride and impenitence."

Paolowitz went away, leaving us oppressed with the frightful suspicion of having been betrayed by one among ourselves, and the dread of being deprived of our books. From this moment the tranquillity we had previously enjoyed gave way to doubt and inquietude: we studied and wrote in fear and trembling. Our books, upon which we had founded our intellectual existence, which formed our one resource to resist the cankering inactivity of imprisonment, were now but a precarious possession, the enjoyment of which had lost all its charms.

This very apprehension made these old friends dearer to me, and I sometimes almost wept at the idea of being separated from them. Nevertheless, on finding day follow day without any realization of our fears, hope re-entered my breast. "Who can tell—perhaps we have exaggerated our peril?" said I to Confalonieri; "time will show." A visit from Count Mitrosky, Governor of Moravia, not being followed by any detrimental result, confirmed my illusion.

My own doubts had entirely disappeared; I was myself again, joyous and full of the future. I wrote to Maroncelli: he was equally confident. I stated my opinion to every one, and they all agreed with it, except Moretti, who always displayed great acuteness when anything connected with Austrian policy came under consideration: he had been taught to thread its every maze during his first captivity.

"Do not be too sanguine," he daily repeated to me in conversations at the wall: "in Austria they act slowly, but not the less surely. Whenever a measure is in accordance with the spirit of the Sovereign or the political system of his government, whenever it is considered useful, rely upon it they will carry it into effect, however long delayed. Do you not think this will be the case here? Do you conceive that the Emperor, repressing as he does throughout his realms, among all his subjects indiscriminately, the exercise of thought and the progress of information, will suffer the state-prisoners to form an exception? Do you suppose, on learning that, instead of languishing in tears, we are studying and instructing ourselves at Spielberg, that he will not order such refractory minds to be stripped of their sole resource, as a means of conquering them and leading them into the right way? Remember what the right way is, in the eyes of the Emperor,—a prostration of all the intellectual faculties, a discouragement, annihilation or debasement of the mind and heart; in a word—imbecility or dishonour. So long as he believes that a prisoner retains energy and loyalty in his character; so long as he has cause to fear that his powers hold out and survive, despite the torments of a prison, he will torture him and keep the bars of his cell closed upon him. Do not let us deceive ourselves, we are yet but at the beginning of a persecution, of which the deprivation of our books will be the first step, and the last, to many of us, death. The wretch whom the Emperor Francis has chosen for the agent to execute his unalterable determination is, alas! only too well fitted for it. Wait in readiness: a period of fresh trials is about to commence."

Although this new foreboding of poor Moretti appeared to me unfounded, I in vain attempted during several days to shake off the impression it produced upon me. I was overwhelmed with this prospect of entire inactivity, this slow but sure extinction of my intellect. In my inquietude I sought information from every quarter, from the jailers as well as the Commandant, whether this evil was likely to take place. The only reply I could gain was, that they did not know, they could not tell.

One day I was reading very attentively, when a tumult of voices in the corridor disturbed me. Hardly had I time to run to the door to listen, when it was opened by the jailers, and the Commandant entered, followed by Schiller, who brought in a chair; "His Excellency is about to visit you," they said, and without further explanation left the room.

What could the Governor have to say? what meant the chair, indicative of a long interview? we were still on the rack of surmise when Count Mitrosky, leaning on a stick and on the arm of the Commandant, entered. He bowed to us politely, with some trouble slowly sat down on the chair, which was placed in the middle of the cell, and making a signal to the Commandant to retire, he at the same time intimated, by a motion of the hand, that we should seat ourselves on our respective beds.

"It is a dreadful work, gentlemen," he began in French, "to pay you a visit when labouring under the gout and a shortness of breath; Spielberg is rather elevated, and the air is somewhat keen, somewhat too keen for the health. That, however," he resumed, with some embarrassment, "is one of the most trifling inconveniences of your unhappy situation, the rigours of which I would gladly alleviate if I possessed the power. Unfortunately, gentlemen, I can do nothing, absolutely nothing. If, therefore, the news which I this day bring cause you pain, do me the justice to recollect that I am acting under superior instructions."

The Governor here made a pause and looked at us; observing the anxiety depicted on our features, he continued, "It gives me much grief to inform you that I have received an order from Vienna, from his Majesty himself, to take away your books."

"Ah, sir, this is a second sentence of death!" I cried in despair.

"I can imagine your distress," answered Count Mitrosky; "I foresaw how much you would feel it; and it is only after having made every application to the Emperor to rescind the order, that I am come here to enforce it. I was unable to do anything after the reports of Don Paolowitz, your confessor. As supreme head of the Censorship of Moravia, I proposed to his Majesty for your sakes that I myself should choose the books you had from my own library, striking out all objectionable passages. I received for reply that no books at all would be allowed you, that you were not sufficiently tractable or sufficiently punished. I then begged that you might be favoured with those you had brought from Milan, under the condition that you should have only one at a time; but his Majesty has given me to understand that you are in his particular charge, and that upon this point he has the strongest reasons for permitting no concessions in future."

"What," I cried, "will you not leave us our devotional books? not even one?"

The Governor echoed my words, compassionately but firmly, "Not even one."

"Ought we to have expected this," I asked, "from him who by his very office is called to succour and console the unfortunate?"

The Governor remained silent a few seconds; then he replied, "I could have wished, gentlemen, that any one rather than myself had been charged to convey this decree to you, but our primary duty is obedience. Let me beg of you not to be too much depressed by this privation, which, had it rested with me, I would have spared you."

We thanked him for his generous politeness as well as his kind intentions, and he quitted us, again protesting that he commiserated our case, and deeply regretted his inability to help us; "For," he added, "you are entirely under the care of his Majesty and Don Paolowitz."

"This is the greatest and most irreparable misfortune which could have fallen upon us," I said to Confalonieri. "What will become of us now? how are we to get through the days, already so long and wearisome? We knew something of captivity before; but now, thanks to Don Stephano, we shall endure it in all its horrors. And for how many years Heaven knows!"

My own affliction at this dreadful announcement was shared by every one in the prison. One universal cry was uttered against the author of this inhuman deprivation,—a cry of despair and distress calling down the justice of God upon those who, without pity for the sufferings and absolute wretchedness of us poor captives, could still tear from us this solace.

"What have we done," cried the Venetian prisoners, "that a priest of the character of Don Paolowitz should be sent here? Before his appearance we had the blessing of seeing and hearing a man of God, who addressed our hearts and consoled them: we were calm and tranquil despite our miseries: we enjoyed our books without restraint; the Governor-general and officials of Spielberg, from the highest to the lowest rank, treated us with indulgence,—with kindness even; and now, after all these years of captivity, there comes a minister of the Gospel, who, instead of alleviating, aggravates our fate. What is reserved for us in the future?"

Moretti answered with these words, "Wait awhile,—before long the Emperor will become our jailer himself."

One, two days elapsed, and our books had not yet been removed. I took advantage of this delay by begging Krall to bring them, one after another, and leave several at a time. The brave young man consented, nor did old Schiller, who was touched by our grief, interfere.

I read much, but with bitterness of heart, and at random. I glanced over volumes which I had perused again and again; and at each page I fancied that I discovered new beauties.

My companions were equally busy in treasuring in their memory such ideas as might serve them in after times to support the monotony of the dungeon. We gave up all exercise, and scarcely allowed ourselves time to devour our wretched dinner, so anxious were we to prolong our studies to the utmost. One of us suggested that we should at all hazards endeavour to preserve a few volumes. The proposal was adopted, and with great difficulty we retained the Gospel, Massillon, Pascal, Milton, and a German dictionary.

The Commandant soon informed us that he had received the order to pack up our books and forward them forthwith to Vienna. They were all taken away the next day with the exception of the few which we had succeeded in secreting.

Some hours afterwards we heard a loud hammering just without our prison. They were nailing down the cases! Each blow went to my heart, as if it had been closing the coffin of a beloved friend.

CHAPTER XII.

Two days after the loss of our books I wrote to Pellico, lamenting this new persecution, and proposing to our friends that we should endeavour to alleviate our misery by corresponding more frequently together, and communicating to each other the results of our literary labours. The appeal was welcomed, and a general league ensued among the prisoners, in order to oppose this brutal war against their intellects. Every one soon contributed as much as lay in his power toward the common cause; and the martyrs of Italian liberty daily proved, by their compositions in prose or verse, that far from succumbing under persecution, they had, on the contrary, tempered afresh their character and their minds in the crucible of misfortune.

Often, whilst reading the remarkable poems of Borsieri, have I regretted that so noble a talent should be condemned to languish and die, without benefiting the world by its productions. Nor have I felt less grief when thinking that Foresti, who was deeply versed in jurisprudence and political economy, would never be able to develope his comprehensive views, for want of materials and the free exercise of thought. Even now, after so many years of suffering, on recalling to mind the redoubled efforts of these poor prisoners to escape intellectual death, my eyes, as formerly, fill with tears; and I exclaim with the prophet, "Woe to those who desire to debase or destroy God's noblest work, the mind of man!"

Among the subjects that, turn by turn, we submitted to each other for writing or reflection, there was one which excited in the highest degree our interest and sympathy, and the recollection of it has ever remained in my heart. This theme, which every one seized with eagerness, was an epitaph in honour of poor Oroboni. I do not now remember to which of us this thought first occurred; but it was adopted with so much unanimity, that it appeared to have come into the minds of all at the same time.

Every one was anxious to trace some lines to render homage to the memory of the youthful and good man, whose death had been that of a saint; and never, I believe, was anything more profoundly felt and better expressed than this tribute of regret, paid by a few prisoners to the virtues of a beloved companion who had preceded them to the tomb. Don Marco was not the last to make use of the word of God to consecrate the edifying end of his friend. Even Villa, whose strength declined daily, found in his tender affection for Oroboni some expressions, the more touching from their appearing to be a last adieu to life. It is now one of my greatest regrets that I cannot enrich these pages by some of the compositions, which depicted the piety of men who were accused of irreligion, and whom it was attempted to reduce to a state of imbecility in order to teach them to adore God.

Submitting to the counsels of my friends, I turned every possible attention to my favourite work. With this view, I braved the insupportable position of writing bent over my pallet, with my head on the paper, that I might not be surprised by the sentinels, who had orders to watch us from the wickets of our prison-doors. I advanced rapidly, and I should often have wanted paper in spite of the friendliness of my companions, if old Schiller, who had perceived the increased consumption, had not also increased the supply with the greatest kindness.

Of paper therefore we had plenty; but this was not the case with ink, of which we dreaded to remain wholly deprived, in spite of all the resources of our industry. In vain did we put in requisition the inventive faculties of our purveyor Caliban: whether he was too narrowly watched, or that, by dint of scratching, he had cleaned the stoves too well, he brought us no more soot. On the other side, the little bits of bricks became scarce and hard; and it was in vain that we reduced them to powder: on dissolving them in water we only obtained a thick liquid, which scarcely marked our bad paper, and stuck to our still worse pens.

Every day this penury increased, and soon I was unable to write a word without going over it several times. I announced, by a few scarcely legible characters, my distress to Pellico and Maroncelli, when sending them by the faithful Caliban the first part of my work. Great was my surprise and emotion, when I received two days afterwards from my friends, a packet containing my manuscript, a quantity of blank slips, a little phial of red liquid, and the following note from Pellico:—

"Your interesting pages have made us shed tears: we thank you for their perusal. How great is the goodness of God in allowing us the enlivening consolation of our friendship! His mercy, which always softens the ills he sends, now enables me to end your regrets and ours, by giving you the means of continuing to plead the cause of morality and religion.

"Yours is a work inspired by Providence, and you must finish it. So long as any blood remains in my veins I shall rejoice if you will employ it in teaching man to seek his happiness in the practice of virtue and the adoration of the Lord. I wish it could as well burn in a lamp, and enable you to devote more time to a composition, of which the beginning has excited the most powerful interest in our hearts.

"Adieu! resume your pen, fill your pages, and consider that, in refusing my brotherly offering, you would be guilty of ingratitude towards Him who wills not that the divine gifts he grants us should be neglected, by hiding under a bushel the light of our intellect."

"See!" said I to Confalonieri, showing him Pellico's note, and the precious phial; "read, and tell me if there exists a kinder-hearted being than Silvio."

He took the letter, and read it at first to himself, then aloud; whilst I, more and more agitated, and penetrated with gratitude, exclaimed, "Woe to me, if I did not perceive the hand of a merciful and gracious God in giving me such incomparable friends in my misfortune! Woe to me, if I did not from this moment consecrate all the powers of my mind and every sentiment of my heart to prove that I was worthy to partake of the captivity of a Confalonieri, and to write with the blood of a Pellico!"

Never at any period of my life had I more strongly felt the power of inspiration than after receiving Silvio's characteristic present. My enthusiasm increased every time I drew the phial from my breast, where I kept it concealed to prevent the coagulation of the blood. Under the influence of the deepest emotion, after thanking him for his favour, I proceeded to write:—

"It seems to me that my thoughts are purer and more christianlike, since I trace them with blood that has flowed in your veins. I have a still firmer desire to compose nothing that is not pervaded by a chaste and severe morality; and I am more than ever penetrated by this holy truth, that the first duty of an author is to prefer in his works utility to glory.

"You see therefore, Silvio, how much I am indebted to you, and what a benefit you have conferred on your friend. But should I not be guilty of egotism if I accepted in future that which you offer me so generously? No, I cannot permit that your body, already so weak, should be still more enfeebled by bleedings.

"The very idea that your health may suffer, shocks my feelings. Do preserve in future your precious blood:

I will not be the occasion of your losing one drop more. As to that which you have already sent, I will do everything in my power to employ it worthily: and if God in his goodness permit that, in quitting Spielberg, I am able to save the pages I now write, I shall show them to every one as the most admirable proof of devotion and charity that one captive ever received from another.

"Ah, Silvio, why are you not near us to receive our blessings! and why must the railing of our gallery prevent you on Sunday from reading on my countenance all the affection that I have vowed to you!"

As an answer to Pellico's friendly objections, I determined to follow his example and procure, like him, an ink of which no rigour, no search, could stop the source. But I presumed too much on my constancy or my cleverness; for it was in vain that, armed with a pin and a thread which I owed to the benevolence of Caliban, I tied up my finger till the skin was cut, and pricked it resolutely many times. No blood flowed, or, if a few drops came, they scarcely sufficed to write for a quarter of an hour.

Pellico guessed this, and obliged me to receive another phial, protesting that it should be the last. Does the poor man, who shares all he possesses with one poorer than himself, do more in the eyes of God than my angelic friend, suffering and weak as he was, did for me?

From day to day, more occupied by my work, I forgot past alarms, and enjoyed a tranquillity which I hoped would never again be disturbed. Alas! one is so easily led to deceive oneself, especially in a prison, that I treated the apprehensions of Moretti as chimerical.

"Wait, wait!" he repeated; "and would to God that my predictions may give you the right some day to call me a false prophet."

My credulous confidence in the future was not long without receiving a fatal shock, from the visit of an important personage, who came to our cell accompanied by the Governor, Count Mitrosky, towards the end of 1825.

This new visitor, decorated with several orders, was no one less than Baron Münch von Bellinghausen, privy-councillor, and one of the reporters of the private cabinet of the Emperor. Why did he come to Spielberg? to listen to the claims of the prisoners? Some of them at first flattered themselves that such was the case; but seeing that the Governor, on showing him our wretched furniture, caused the coverlids to be taken off and the pallets to be turned over, they became convinced that the visit of the imperial envoy was only intended to re-assure his master that his cruel orders were faithfully executed, and that our condition was as wretched as he could wish.

It is true, and I am eager to say so, that Baron von Bellinghausen attempted to soften all that was painful in such a mission by the politest manners, and appeared to listen benevolently to our requests; but, nevertheless, we were unable to see anything in this visit except a police inspection, tending to satisfy the restless animosity of the Sovereign against our helpless persons.

Our doubts, had any remained, would have been entirely removed by Don Stephano Paolowitz, who returned from Vienna shortly after the apparition of the privy-councillor. "Well, sir," he asked, drawing himself up on his chair, "you have been honoured by an important visit during my absence. It is only with him and with me that his Majesty converses respecting yourselves; and if it so pleased the Baron Münch von Bellinghausen, he could soon set you at liberty."

"Indeed! But is he exclusively charged with the care of us? Had I known this, I would have entreated him to give us back our books."

"And you would have done wrong, my son, very wrong; for, without gaining anything, you would have irritated his Majesty, to whom the Baron must have made his report. Understand that: all comes from the Emperor; and if I said that his Excellency can give you freedom, I meant indirectly and by circuitous means."

"To whom should we address ourselves to obtain the restoration of our books? to yourself?"

"To me!" replied Don Stephano, colouring; "Heaven preserve me from such a request!"

"But what can there be to frighten you in this? Did we not enjoy them tranquilly for many months?"

"That is exactly the evil, young man; for it was without the Emperor's knowledge. On hearing that such an infraction had been made in the penitential regulation of the state-prisoners, his Majesty's displeasure was extreme."

"How did he learn this," I inquired imprudently enough, "if, as you assure me, the prohibition came directly from him?"

"Must I repeat to you a hundred times," exclaimed Don Paolowitz in an angry tone, "that you depend entirely on our august Sovereign? It was by his own order that Baron Münch von Bellinghausen came here to see that all was correct. Governor Mitrosky must now look to himself if he would avoid falling into disgrace. You have often seen him in Spielberg lately, have you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"In future his visits will be more frequent still."

"It would seem that his age and rank might dispense him from such a service."

"Young man, neither age nor rank are to be considered when obedience to the Emperor is required. In the Austrian monarchy the first duty, for the lowest as well as the highest, is, thanks to God, to have no other will than the wish of the Sovereign. Thus, however old and gouty Count Mitrosky may be, you will see him visit your cells every week, if the abuses which are going on should render it necessary."

"Abuses, sir! Why do you not come and spend a day with us? At the sight of our misery you would, I am sure, ask yourself how it is possible to make our fate more terrible."

"Your fate! it is your own work, and you will aggravate it still more."

"Sir, our coarse and scanty clothes leave us exposed to the deadly cold of this climate during half the year; the irons with which we are loaded bruise our limbs; our clumsy boots take the skin off our feet; we suffer from want of food, and languish in dungeons both damp and dark. Yet I have never complained to you, so long as we had books, to help us to endure all that is horrible and overwhelming in our situation. Even to-day I should have been silent, had not your words made me apprehend some new rigour. Perhaps the Emperor is ignorant also of our half-hour's walk on the platform?"

"It is not the body his Majesty wishes to punish; it is the mind. God has condemned to eternal darkness the angels who raised their rebellious eyes to his throne. It is just that legitimate sovereigns, who are the images of God upon earth, should inflict the most terrible punishments on the madmen who have become guilty of high-treason. As this crime is only committed in a delirium of the mind, it is through the mind that the evil must be attacked; for this purpose his Majesty, in his infinite goodness, sent an ecclesiastic to instruct the prisoners of state in their religion, to teach them resignation, to speak to them of a time to come; and seeing that the Word of God produced no fruit, he has resolved, in the warmth of his charity, to withdraw their books, which are the cause of their hardness of heart."

Satisfied with his strange discourse, Don Stephano now looked at me triumphantly, and appeared to say, 'Can you find any answer to such arguments?' Fearful of not being sufficiently master of myself, I paused a little, then replied calmly, "I never could believe till this moment, sir, that we were thus immediately the object of his imperial Majesty's care; but, from what you have just said, I no longer can entertain the least doubt. The intentions of the Emperor in reducing us, during an imprisonment already so cruel, to a state of complete inaction, may be charitable, I am willing to believe, but I fear he may have mistaken the means, and that, while desiring our salvation, he exposes us to perdition."

"What do you mean?" cried Don Paolowitz.

"That idleness, in all situations of life, is the mother of mischief and of every vice; and that in prison, more than elsewhere, it can only lead men to despair or madness."

"And prayer, my son?"

"Prayer, sir, cannot alone suffice for days and years to the heart and mind of a prisoner."

"Nevertheless it must."

"Thus deprived of every occupation, we might fall into a state of gloomy depression, and perhaps be led to deny everything—even the Divine mercy: while the books which have been taken from us were excellent works, from which we drew ideas of morality and justice, and an increasing belief in God and the truths of revelation. This, sir, is the fruit we gathered from our studies; and if I have myself returned to the religious sentiments of my childhood, I owe it in a great measure to the sublime masters of whom we lament the loss."

"Such is not his Majesty's opinion, nor mine. It is not by learning that hearts are improved, but by obedience and humility. Has not mankind perished because our mother Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge? You will have no more books of that kind; such is the will of the Emperor. Some time hence, perhaps, we shall see about giving you some prayer-books, some catechisms, if you are worthy of them. Now go, and rely on the clemency of our religious Sovereign. Meanwhile he has consulted me respecting your request, and is willing to allow you the permission of having a light in your cell for two or three hours during the evening."

I wished to reply to Don Stephano, that this permission was similar to putting a table with empty plates before a man dying of hunger; but I was restrained by the fear of depriving my companions of what, at all events, might be looked on as a resource. After all, this light, announced so pompously, was nothing more than a lamp placed in the corridor, and reflected through a pane of glass half a foot square, introduced in the door of our dungeon. The conversation and conduct of Don Stephano became so clear and significant, that it was impossible in future to mistake the part he played. The most moderate qualified it as an excess of zeal; but Moretti, who had first sounded the alarm, stigmatized him by the infamous title of *spy*.

"A priest!" said I, "however unchristian-like his conduct may be, I cannot believe that: for a clergyman to descend to such a degree of baseness would be too odious."

"In Austria," replied Moretti, "the office of a spy is not considered a degradation: it is a thing received, and passed into the habits and manners of the people, especially since the reign of the present Emperor. All classes of society are tainted by this shameful leprosy, which destroys all confidence, even in the bosom of families. During my first imprisonment I heard an Austrian priest say of his brother, who was a clergyman as well as himself, 'I would not trust to his discretion, for he *reports*; but as to the rest he is a very good fellow.' Paolowitz, in uniting the functions of confessor and police-agent, has done nothing but conform to the system of his Sovereign.

Though appearances were so decidedly against Don Stephano, we hesitated long before we adopted wholly the opinion of the Colonel. But, meddling with everything at Spielberg, and even in the town of Brünn, he soon betrayed his real character, and excited the hatred not only of the prisoners of state, but also of all the officials, from the Governor to the lowest guard.

"This priest," exclaimed old Schiller one day, "dishonours the cloth he wears. Would you believe it, he told me that I do not properly fulfill my office of jailer, and that I shall get myself into trouble. Let him say mass, and leave his neighbour in peace. On the contrary, he watches us; he prowls about Spielberg every evening; and yesterday I caught him behind the bastion, listening for hours to hear if you spoke to each other from the windows. Then he inquires right and left, of the convicts as well as the guards, to find something to report against us."

"Rather say, against the poor prisoners, my good Schiller. It is owing to him that we are deprived of our books."

"Very true. Your case was pitiable enough before this messenger of Satan came to torment you."

Seeing that the opportunity was favourable for getting more and more into the confidence of the old soldier, I scraped together all the German I had learned, in order to continue the conversation. "God knows," said I, "where all this will stop; for his intentions appear more hostile than ever. Ours is a terrible destiny, Schiller! it is cruel to feel one's body and mind perishing thus by degrees. How I regret that I was not executed!"

At these words Schiller looked at me compassionately, exclaiming, "Poor young man!"

"And what will become of us, if we lose you in consequence of the reports of Paolowitz?"

"I care as much for him as *that*," he answered, knocking his keys together. "His excellency the Governor knows me. That priest has neither religion nor conscience; but I have, and I cannot bear to see prisoners like you so barbarously treated without my heart bleeding."

"You have often proved this to me, my good Schiller, in satisfying my hunger."

"I will prove it to you still better, and immediately."

So saying, in two strides he reached the door, and slammed it to, only to open it two minutes afterwards with still more noise. "Here," cried he, "here is a beautiful German book."

I took it, and pressing affectionately the hand that offered it, I returned my warmest thanks. Schiller puffed out his cheeks and began to laugh, saying, "Cursed devil, away with you! we shall see which will get the better of us two. When you have read that, I will give you another and another, so long as I can procure any. You are worse off than the convicts: they go out, and breathe fresh air all day, whilst you are shut up here from morning till night. It is not just, especially now that you have nothing to occupy you."

"God will reward you for what you do for us, Schiller; and if ever we are able to give you proofs of our gratitude, be sure that we shall be happy to do so."

"The reward is here," he replied, putting his hand energetically on his heart. "It is my duty as a Christian to prevent a minister of Christ from aggravating the sufferings of the prisoners committed to my charge."

From this moment we daily made some progress in the confidence and good graces of Schiller; and soon an alliance, offensive and defensive, was formed against the designs of Don Stephano, with whose proceedings we thus generally became acquainted. Having, therefore, no longer any motive to make a mystery with our brave jailer of the books we had saved from the wreck, I showed them to him, together with the written sheets of my work.

"I had guessed as much," he answered laughing. "I knew it all, though I must confess I was some time before I could account for so great a consumption of brown paper. That is indeed capital! A German would live a hundred years without making such an invention. Now you may write away; and if you will confide to me what you have already written, I will keep it carefully for you."

This was a happy day for me. I acquired the certainty of not wanting materials to finish my undertaking, as well as the hope that I should be able not only to conceal my manuscript, but perhaps even to send it to France. I therefore took up again, with more spirit than ever, my consoling occupation, which the presence of Don Stephano at Spielberg had for a short time interrupted; and I felt an indescribable comfort in thinking, that I should both conclude and save the fruit of my labour, since Providence seemed to watch over its preservation.

CHAPTER XIII.

With a smile on his features, Confalonieri whispered to me one morning as I returned from my walk, "I have just obtained what I had never dared to hope for till to-day. Old Schiller consents to bring me the means of writing a letter to a friend of Theresa, and undertakes to forward it by a safe conveyance."

"Is it possible?" I exclaimed, transported with joy.

"It is so. Today, or tomorrow at the latest, he will bring us paper and ink."

I pressed my friend in my arms, uttering in a sort of delirium words without connexion. When I had subdued my feelings I asked, "But are you certain, with your slight knowledge of German, that Schiller understood you?"

"I am sure," he answered.

"How I long to see you writing the letter!"

"We must both work at it. I have reckoned on you to give it a commercial appearance, for we must send it under cover to N——, the merchant at Trieste."

"I shall be delighted to help you.—This first step of brave Schiller will, no doubt, be followed by another of still more consequence. Perhaps the worthy man is destined to be the instrument of your deliverance."

"Say of *our* deliverance," replied my friend. "I will not yield my mind to such hopes; but if these dreams were even to be realized I should never consent to a flight unless you shared it with me."

The door opened and Schiller appeared, drawing from under his great-coat, paper, pen, and ink, as quietly as if he were bringing us our daily food. On our attempting to express our gratitude, he turned away roughly, saying, "Good, good!"

When about to trace the first line, I was seized with such a fit of trembling that I was obliged to leave off for a few minutes, fearing to make a blunder at every word, and stopping when the least noise was made in the corridor. I contrived to write, but never was a petition for pardon written so slowly and with such attention and perplexity. When my task was at length accomplished and I saw that nothing had been forgotten, —that the lines were straight and the characters well-formed, and that the whole had an air of technicality which looked merchantlike,—I screamed with joy; and proud of my success, I said to Confalonieri, who was standing before the door to prevent the sentinels and jailers from seeing, "Look here, is this right?"

"Wonderfully well! Nothing is wanted but the address, and in this you must employ your whole talent."

The letter was folded; but when it became necessary to trace in an English hand Mr. ——, my heart failed me. After some trials, I wrote in a firm and almost elegant English character the direction; when, clapping my hands, I cried, "Heaven be praised! Now, my friend, it is for you to take my place. I will be sentinel."

In a few moments he drew from a hiding-place in the floor of the prison a packet of white powder, mixed a pinch of it in a little phial, and began to write with this sympathetic ink to Theresa's best friend. When the letter was finished we consigned it to old Schiller, who promised to have it put into the post at some other town than Brünn. We prayed fervently that this dangerous message, upon which perhaps our fate depended, and which was for some days the only subject of our conjectures and alarms, might reach its destination safely. Any unusual noise in the corridor, or a word from the Commandant of Spielberg, sufficed to give rise to serious uneasiness. At last this agitation subsided, and we began to indulge in the fondest hopes.

One morning, in February 1826, while rejoicing with Confalonieri that my work, the fruit of his wisdom and of Silvio's blood, was very nearly concluded, a sudden noise of voices and footsteps in the corridor attracted our attention. I hastened to put away my manuscript and the writing materials, and I had scarcely done this when the Director of Police of Moravia appeared at the door.

"Do you know me?" said he, slightly touching his hat.

We bowed and answered in the affirmative. He then came forward, to allow the Commandant of Spielberg and Schiller to enter.

"Are the daily visits regularly made in each cell?" he asked in German.

"They are," replied the Commandant Schmerschek.

"And you have never found anything against the regulations?"

"Never: I am present myself at the inspection of the irons, and as to the rest the most active watch is exercised."

The Director of Police now made a sign to Schiller to come near my bed. The idea that every straw and plank of my wretched couch was about to be minutely examined filled me with terror on account of my manuscript, and all my presence of mind was necessary to prevent my betraying myself. The bed-clothes were taken off, the straw mattrass shaken; and Schiller in his zeal was going to throw it on the ground, when the Director said to him, "That is enough." These words relieved my fears, and caused the blood to circulate once more in my veins. Yet the shock had been so terrible, and the fear of losing in one moment the fruit of my long labour had so completely overwhelmed me, that I could not articulate a word so long as the visitors remained in our dungeon.

"What a peril we have escaped!" said I to Confalonieri, as soon as the Director of Police had taken leave of us. "How thankful we should be to Providence! We were within an inch of detection: if they had lifted up my mattrass, the manuscript would have been discovered; then what searches, what reports sent to the Emperor! what reprimands, what punishments! Schiller, our only hope, discharged, and a hundred fresh severities inflicted, and among them, doubtless, our separation!"

Meanwhile the Director of Police continued his visits in the other prisons, and discovered two or three books left inadvertently under a counterpane. The alarm among us was great. Poor Schiller received a sharp reproof, and bade us adieu as if he were to be sent away immediately. His fears, in which we shared, kept us for the rest of the day in a state of perplexity, that was changed into certainty when we saw him enter next morning with a grave and mysterious air.

"Well then, old comrade," said I gloomily, "are we to part? have you been dismissed?"

"No," he replied.

"Then what is the cause of your troubled countenance?"

"The Emperor is ill, very ill."

"What do you say, Schiller?—Is it true?"

"Yes: they even say that his life is in danger."

May God forgive the emotion of joy which seized my soul! All melancholy disappeared: liberty, its pleasures and its happiness, were alone present to my thoughts. The Emperor ill—dying—dead!—and, after him, the amnesty of the new Sovereign, the return to my native country, the embraces of my family! These ideas all crowded at once into my mind.

"But are you sure of what you tell us?" I asked of Schiller: "have you not been deceived?"

"The whole town knows it, and every one expects his Majesty's death."

"What is his disease?"

"I have not yet learned, but I will go and inquire."

"Go, I said, "but return quickly, and bring us more certain intelligence."

Scarcely had he left us when I gave free vent to my exultation. "Before six months are over, Frederic, we shall be free! If they admit, in Austria, that the Emperor is dangerously ill, there must be no hopes of his recovery. May God give him a seat in his paradise! I wish it him with all my soul."

We then hastened to make our companions share our joy, I calling Moretti to the wall, and the Count doing the same on the other side to Borsieri. A few hours afterwards almost all the prisoners were informed of the fortunate event, and all were in a state of expectation.

Moretti tapped at the wall every moment to know if we had learnt anything new. It is impossible to conceive the restless impatience and anxiety of the captives to gather intelligence of the state and progress of a disorder on which their fate depended. Even at this distance of time, as I write, I cannot think without bitter grief of the sufferings we should have been spared had it pleased Providence that the hour of our deliverance should have struck at that moment. What I can say of my own feelings is, that the thought of this sudden, unexpected liberty occupied my days and disturbed my sleep.

"Schiller, Schiller, what news?" I asked every time the good creature came into the prison. "Have you made inquiries?"

"I know nothing more," he replied, with a phlegm that at such a moment drove me almost out of my senses. "As to inquiring about the Emperor's illness, I am not fool enough to compromise myself thus."

"But who would know?"

"There are spies everywhere: at Brünn you may count them by thousands."

"Perhaps the matter is not so serious as it was at first imagined."

"On the contrary, the less they speak of it the more serious it is. But I am this evening to see an old comrade, who is a Sergeant of Police, and perhaps I may learn something from him."

"Go, my old fellow, and come back soon to tell us what you have heard."

He returned a few minutes before the last evening round.

"Well," said I, "what is going on? Have you seen the Sergeant? What has he told you?"

"Ah! he is a cunning fox; but we shall know something tomorrow."

"Why tomorrow?"

"Because perhaps the Director of Police will come again to Spielberg with his Excellency the Governor. Good night! we shall see tomorrow." And he went away, leaving us in a state of uncertainty.

At daybreak Schiller came as usual to bring us our rations of bread; and as he repeated more explicitly that it was very probable the authorities would pay us another visit, I begged him to take charge of my manuscript and hide it carefully. To this he readily consented, adding,—

"This visit of the Director of Police makes me very uneasy: for greater safety, I shall take away all the books that you kept back when the others were sent to Vienna."

"Agreed, good Schiller: here they are. What news of the Emperor?"

"That he is very ill, and that his inflammation of the lungs—"

"Is it an inflammation of the lungs? then, my dear friend, you may set your mind at rest: there is nothing alarming in this inspection of the Director."

"I do not say there is; but with so old a fox it is better to have more than one hole to one's burrow."

At nine o'clock the name of Schiller was called out aloud; and a few moments afterwards we distinguished the voice of the Director of Police, who appeared to be accompanied by several persons. We both listened at the door in the greatest anxiety the whole morning, during which time the cells of our companions were visited successively. More and more persuaded that we were about to be submitted to a rigorous search, we set to work to hide or destroy any little things we might have about us. No men ever exerted themselves with more solicitude to save their fortune from shipwreck, than we did to conceal the stump of a pen or a little bit of pencil from the eyes of the police-gang. Our hopes of deliverance had been shaken at the idea of this severity, and we said to each other, that if the Emperor had been near dying we should not have been thus tormented.

These doubts were increased, when Schiller, quitting for a moment the Director to bring us our dinner, said that every place, even the person, was searched, and hastily disappeared.

Shortly after the door again creaked on its hinges, and the Director of Police, the Commandant of Spielberg, and six other individuals entered: our narrow cell could scarcely hold them.

"Here I am again, gentlemen," said the Director in an embarrassed manner; "but I must—his Majesty desires—it is extremely painful—I am ordered to search you."

"We are at your disposal, sir," we replied.

A well-dressed gentleman then came up to me, put his hands in my pocket, felt all the linings and every part of my body, whilst several keepers carried away my straw mattrass, and took down the boards of my bed, submitting each article to the inspection of the Director.

After having carefully examined them, he went up to the bedstead itself, looked closely at the sides and legs, touched every part, left no crack, inequality, or lining unnoticed. This done, my coarse counterpane was also brought to him and handled in every direction, from end to end, as if it had been expected to conceal some paper. Then came the turn of the straw mattrass, in which he plunged his white hands, assisted by the other gentleman, whose appearance seemed little to accord with his employment.

When they had concluded this rascally operation, which I witnessed with surprise, disgust, and pity, the Director turned to me and said, "Now undress yourself."

"Undress myself, sir? but it is very cold."

"The order is such," he replied drily.

"I submit, sir," and I took off my clothes: but that was not enough; he required me to pull off my shoes and stockings, and even my shirt.

I reddened, and feeling my patience going, I asked the Director whether he might not save me the mortification of remaining naked before the eyes of every one.

"It is the order."

"But it seems to me that this last and indispensable garment might be left us without disobeying the commands you have received. Look, sir; examine my hands and feet bruised by the irons. Can I, in this state, keep anything concealed from your search?"

The Director replied by one of those shrugs of the shoulders and raising of the eyebrows which signify—"What can I do? I have no will in the matter."

"Since, then," said I sorrowfully, "the cup of bitterness must be drained to the very dregs, it shall be done. But I must confess, sir, that after three years' imprisonment I was far from expecting such severity."

I then gave my last garment to the Director's acolyte, and remained with my eyes bent on the ground, my heart filled with indignation, while my whole person, and the coarse shirt that a beggar would not have worn, were passed in review.

"Is it over, sir?" I asked of the Director, seeing myself no longer under inspection; "and may I put on my clothes?"

"Not yet,—in a short time; only take your shirt."

"What! am I to remain longer in this state of nakedness?"

"It is the order; I cannot help it." And saying this he made a sign for the straw mattrass, counterpane, and clothes to be carried out of the room, leaving me exposed to the damp and cold air of the dungeon and to the gaze of all the bystanders.

This noble exploit ended, the Director made me a slight bow and turned to Confalonieri, who was submitted to the same indignities as myself. He also, though suffering, was obliged to get up to yield his miserable couch, his convict clothing, and even his feeble body to their examination. It was an afflicting spectacle to see the man I most loved and revered in the world treated by these ruffians of the Police like the worst malefactor: to see him stand with naked feet, stripped of every particle of dress, before these tools of arbitrary power, who neither respected his gray hair, blanched by sorrow and suffering, nor the infirmities consequent on his imprisonment, nor the noble dignity of his character. Yet this man, on whom they dared to lay their impure hands, endured the unworthy treatment with the most admirable patience. Not one word of discontent escaped his lips, no sign of contempt or of anger was depicted on his countenance. He felt— but his soul was too great even to protest against such infamy, otherwise than by a dignified resignation; and, like myself, he stood in silence, while the Police continued their search into every corner, from the smallest hole in the floor to the cobwebs with which the roof and the grated window of the dungeon were hung.

The Director was not satisfied with having merely our water-jug and the tub in which we washed brought for his examination; but this great functionary inclined his head to contemplate that which a turnkey would have refrained from inspecting in the fear of raising disgust in his comrades.

I was astonished at seeing to what baseness the will of an absolute despot can make the highest in power stoop, and so far forgot my humiliating state of nakedness as really to compassionate the Director. When he took leave of us, repeating that he was sorry to have inconvenienced us, but that it had been by command, not by his wish, I replied that he was more to be pitied than ourselves; and my words called a blush into his face.

"God knows," said I to Confalonieri when we were alone, "how long we shall be left in this John-the-Baptist costume. Was there ever such an abuse of power! one's spirit revolts at this brutality. A melancholy future is indeed before us, if we owe this indignity to orders emanating from Vienna, to the Emperor himself.—But you are very cold," I continued, seeing Confalonieri looking paler and paler. "What cruelty to keep us stripped so long! Did they not examine and re-examine enough before our eyes the rags that scarcely covered us? It is intolerable!"

"Let us not complain too much," answered my friend. "What would it have been if they had discovered our writing materials, and if your manuscript had been seized!"

These last words fell upon my heart like the sound of a knell. "If they were to visit Schiller's apartments!" I exclaimed: "if the poor old fellow—the idea is frightful! it had not before entered my mind. Oh, my God, have mercy on us!"

I rushed to the door, and, notwithstanding the icy air which penetrated my naked body, I remained there some time trying to catch every sound in the corridor. "They are now leaving Moretti's prison!" said I: "it is the last—Schiller's room is only a few steps beyond: —they return our way—I breathe!—No, it is only one man—the others turn to the right.—Alas! they stop; the door that opened and creaked is Schiller's! What torture to be kept thus in suspense, unable to attempt anything to save him!"

It was in vain that the Count attempted to calm me. So great were my fears, so excited was my imagination, that, hearing the steps of soldiers in the corridor, I cried out, "They are taking him away—I know his walk. Poor Schiller! at his age imprisonment, flogging!—How bitterly I regret having exposed him to such a misfortune!"

I was so overwhelmed by the dread of having caused the ruin of a man from whom I had only received benefits, that I ceased for a moment to listen to the movements of the Police. At last I heard the heavy and jerking steps of Schiller approaching. He was coming, but how slowly for my impatience! When he was opposite, I tapped gently at the door. He stopped, opened the iron plate of the wicket, and said, "All is right! the cursed papers are burnt:" and he then went back towards his room.

For some moments I gave myself up to joy at the unexpected safety of our kind jailer; but when I reflected on the cost at which it had been bought, my exultation gave way to sadness and regret. I felt as a poor mother would, whose life has been devoted to an only child, on which she had lavished all her care and attention, and who sees it snatched from her at the moment when, full of strength and beauty, it had become the hope and delight of her existence.

I have been in my life subjected to many trials, but few ever struck me so forcibly, or left me so long a prey to melancholy, as the loss of this work, on which I had founded so many expectations, every page of which had been to me a source of ineffable consolation and pleasure. Some hours afterwards Schiller came to restore our clothes, and told us how, suspecting the intentions of the Director of Police, he had slipped for a moment into his room and thrust the papers into his stove. It cost me an effort to answer him, "You have done well—it was very fortunate."

The next morning, at twelve o'clock, on arriving on the platform, I heard all the bells of the town first sounded and then rung together in a peal. "What rejoicing is this?" I inquired of Krall.

"A *Te Deum* is sung, to return thanks to God for the recovery of the health of the Emperor. All the authorities, both civil and military, are present. Do you hear the military band? How grand!"

Without one word more, I went to lean on the parapet near Pellico's prison, and whilst the return to life of a feeble old man was celebrated with such pomp, I thought of the melancholy fate of all those youthful prisoners, whom this event condemned perhaps to occupy one day a place in the cemetery before my eyes. My distressed mind then found consolation in the recollection that death strikes indiscriminately the young and the old, the poor and the rich, and that the crosses I beheld were a sign of grace and eternal felicity to those only who have been grateful towards our heavenly Father, good and charitable towards their brethren in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIV.

The savage severity the Director General of Police had displayed against us in his second visit had alarmed us considerably; and our fears were soon still more increased by the return of Don Stephano Paolowitz, to whose reports most of us attributed this aggravation of our wretchedness. By his incessant spying and questioning, his alternate flattering and threatening every one connected with us as well as ourselves, the renegade priest had shown but too clearly that he had bartered the holy ministry of God for the trade of a Police agent, and that the salvation of our souls was the least of his thoughts.

When I told him of the treatment we had undergone, he said, "These gentlemen had imagined that the orders of the monarch might be eluded with impunity; but I have proved to them that submission to his supreme will is the duty of all. Things must go on very differently in future: his Majesty must be obeyed.—Would you believe it? I myself had been denounced and subjected to an inquiry; but, thanks to God and my protector his Excellency Baron Münch von Bellinghausen, the blame has fallen back on the calumniators, and our gracious Sovereign, to give me a testimony of his imperial satisfaction, has appointed me Court Chaplain. These golden tassels, which you see on my hat and to my sash, are the insignia of my new office. You ought to rejoice with me at this proof of the importance the Emperor attaches to yourselves—"

"And to the loyal services you have rendered him," I added, trying to repress the smile that such baseness, vanity, and folly, excited on my lips.

"Certainly," resumed Don Stephano, raising his eyes to heaven; "for I serve his Majesty as I would my father, as I do God,—with my heart and soul. It is the least I can do to justify the confidence with which he deigns to honour me. Could you but hear him when he chats with me as with his equal, and that for hours together!"

"We are of so little consequence," I replied with a doubting air, "that I cannot help feeling astonished that we should occupy the thoughts of so great a monarch, were it only for ten minutes."

"Of so little consequence! Undeceive yourself, my son; there are few things, I may say none, which engross his Majesty's mind so much as his Spielberg prisoners. Nothing passes within these ramparts of which he is not informed. The Emperor has a plan of this fortress and knows exactly the position of your dungeons, and even the numbers on their doors. He knows also, I assure you, how you are coupled together; and no change takes place without an express order from his own hand. You may therefore judge of the importance attached to your persons by the interest he takes in you. Even during the illness which lately endangered his life, he gave unequivocal proofs of this truly paternal solicitude. You must doubtless have known," asked Don Stephano, fixing on me a scrutinizing look, "that his Majesty has been ill?"

"Who could have said anything to us on the subject?" I answered without hesitation: "these walls do not speak."

"No, but men do; and we know—but it is enough: the time will come when every one will be rewarded according to his works. It is fortunate for you that the Director of Police has discovered no irregularity in your cell, for in the eyes of the Emperor it is a most serious affair. Several of your companions will know soon the cost of such disobedience."

"What has been found?" I inquired with surprise.

"The pens and written scraps of paper that have been seized may subject the delinquents to severe punishment."

"But what harm have they done?"

"What harm!" he repeated indignantly: "have I not told you again and again that his Majesty wishes to heal your souls, and that this cure cannot be accomplished so long as the prisoners have other thoughts than those of repentance and religion? The Emperor's will is well known to me: on this point it is absolute; and you ought to return him continual thanks for his anxiety for your eternal salvation."

What could I answer to such a speech? I was silent; and giving a last look at the golden tassels of the new Court Chaplain, I shuddered for us poor captives, on thinking of the price at which this promotion had been bought by the man who passed for our spiritual director.

Deprived of all occupation I now fell into the lowest despondency; but the friend given me by Providence forgot his own troubles, to pour balm into my wounds and revive my spirits. "Trust me," said he, "with the care of ameliorating our position and of feeding the flame of your intellect. As soon as Don Paolowitz is gone I will obtain from Schiller some books and paper for you."

I listened and hoped; thinking that nothing was impossible to him whose eloquence could so easily win all hearts.

Meanwhile Don Stephano displayed his inquisitorial zeal increasingly every day; his language with every one became harsher and more peremptory, often even insolent. But as he had the support of the Emperor, all trembled lest they might expose themselves to his denunciations. Schiller alone, enraged at the conduct of this hypocritical priest, as he called him, showed him neither servility nor deference.— "Let him do what he pleases," said he to me murmuring; "let him denounce me to the Emperor,—I fear nothing."

Nevertheless the phlegm and assurance of the old soldier were put one day to so rude a test, that he came to our dungeon to vent his anger and seek relief from his uneasiness. "That priest! that priest!" he broke forth. "Would you believe that he has accused me publicly of being a bad servant to the Emperor? Have I not shed my blood in ten battles? He represents me as an old drunkard, who sees nothing of what is passing before his eyes; and he boasts that the Director General of Police will draw up a report respecting the seizure made in the cells of your companions, and that old Schiller shall suffer for it. Our Emperor is good: if he knew that you are a hundred times worse off than the greatest malefactors we have here, I am sure he would never permit that I should be punished for leaving you some pieces of bad paper and a few old quills. But that priest deceives him, and I shall be discharged from my situation because I will not torment you day and night."

We were still a prey to these painful apprehensions respecting our compassionate jailer, when the answer to the letter we had despatched to Trieste reached us by express.

I cannot describe the mingled emotion of joy and grief which filled the breast of Confalonieri on learning, for the first time after a silence of upwards of two years, all that related to his unhappy wife and friends. But I will state (for gratitude is a duty as sweet as it is sacred) that his first thought after having read again and again this mysterious answer, was the benefit that might result to his companions in captivity. "Heaven grant that I may succeed in my project!" said he to me: "it will be the brightest day of my existence."

His scheme was to prevail on Schiller to favour an escape. What he said or did to attain his object God only knows; but when I returned from my walk he told me exultingly, "I have succeeded; Schiller consents; but there is one point on which we cannot agree; that is, the number of companions I am to have."

"What! you wish for others also?"

"For myself only I would not attempt it. I still trust that those who are condemned to the longest imprisonment will share my lot."

This generous hope was not realized. Schiller constantly refused to comply with his entreaties, and it was only with great difficulty that he obtained that I should accompany him.

The plan of escape had been drawn up: everything was provided for, and arranged with such prudence and sagacity that I could not but indulge in the confidence of success.

Even Schiller himself was so persuaded of its practicability, that he never thought for an instant of the possibility of a failure. "How the cursed gentleman in black," said he to us on bringing writing materials, "will be surprised when he learns that the two largest birds have fled! Ha, ha! what a face he will make! Ha, ha, ha!"

"The more so," I observed, "that, if we get out, in all probability the others will soon obtain their pardon."

"That is true: and Don Stephano will have no further promotion to gain."

"And it is to you, Schiller, to you alone," continued I, "that we shall owe our liberty. What return can we make you for such a service?"

"Do not mention it," he replied; "I am old: I have no debts, and the few florins which I possess are sufficient for the short time I have to live. The old horse dies where it is tied."

"What! you will not let us go alone?"

"No, no; a brave young man, of whose fidelity I am certain, shall be your guide. But I will say nothing to him till the moment of putting our plan into execution."

"That is very well, my good Schiller; but if he should fail you then?"

"Well, shall I not be there? I will not leave you in embarrassment, rest assured."

"Then we may write that our friends may send here a trusty man to assist us in our flight?"

"Doubtless: I have given my word; I will not recede from it."

On our being left alone, Confalonieri requested me to go and watch at the door, that nothing might interrupt him as he prepared the letter. I went; but what a change had been effected in my whole being since liberty had presented her smiling countenance at the bars of my prison! I was drunk with hope and joy; and in spite of my efforts not to interrupt my friend in his important occupation, I could not help saying, "In three weeks, —can it be possible?—in three weeks we may be in France! No more melancholy! no more dejection! To your Theresa, Frederick, I owe my life: to her also I shall be indebted for my liberty; for I have no doubt she watches over us. She alone can be the means of your deliverance; that is a right, a reward which belongs to her."

"My mind would have been relieved from a heavy burden," he answered, "if I could have spared her the anxiety attending this attempt. But God, I dare to hope, will soon recompense her for so many sufferings."

"The Emperor has done well not to die," I observed after a short pause. "What a difference between a legal release and this bold escape—this brilliant return to life!"

When the letter was finished the Count delivered it to Schiller, desiring him to give it to the bearer of the despatch; then he said to me, "If our star be propitious, in twenty days at the latest, the individual engaged to aid us in our flight will be here."

"Heaven grant he may arrive before Schiller is taken from us!"

"He will be here two months yet, if even he quits at all. They do not move so quickly in Austria; and the report with which Don Stephano threatens us is not commenced yet. It is principally on this slowness that I rely, in risking the enterprise. Besides, we have no choice left: the bare possibility of success renders it imperative on me to do everything in my power to put an end to our imprisonment."

Some minutes after, as I spoke of the disappointment of the Director of Police, the discontent of the Emperor, and the astonishment of our companions, Confalonieri exclaimed, "Why can I not take them with me! Why must I forgo so great a consolation!"

These words, uttered in sorrowful accents, would alone have sufficed to reveal the generosity of his mind, which never, under any circumstances, seemed to know the meaning of the word *self*.

"Console yourself," said I to him: "the condition of the other prisoners can only improve. The Emperor will more readily set them at liberty when you are no longer in his power. But let me now speak of your Theresa, whose name may henceforth be pronounced in this dungeon without being a source of grief to you. What a life of bliss will be hers—she who will have twice saved her husband!"

"I entreat you, Alexander, let us not abandon ourselves to the seducing prospects of a too uncertain future. Our attempt may succeed; but if it failed, what would support us under the disappointment? Let us wait, let us even hope; but let us also recollect that the slightest accident may ruin the best arranged plan, and that fate has hitherto unrelentingly opposed us. My poor Theresa has suffered so much since our departure from Milan," added he, showing me the letter, "that my heart cannot beat with joy. Her uneasiness respecting my life, her fruitless endeavours to establish a correspondence with me, her regrets and anxieties, not to speak of the continual persecutions of the Police, all have impaired a constitution that was already shattered. Then the loss of her best friend, the Baroness Dembowsky, has given her a blow, the depth of which she in vain attempts to dissemble."

"What!" I exclaimed, "is she dead? the Matilda whose admirable qualities you have so much extolled,—the mother who was left a widow so young, and who devoted herself so entirely to the education and happiness of her two sons! Alas! you had taught me to love her, and I must regret her as a friend."

"Yes," he replied, "she is dead; and my ill-fated

Theresa has lost in her more than a sister; for Matilda Dembowsky would not have shrunk at any danger or sacrifice, when she had her country or her friends to serve. Gifted with a deep sensibility and a lofty soul, with great energy of character and uncommon prudence, she would have soothed the grief of my Theresa and aided her in all her projects. Alas! Matilda is no more, and her loss is irreparable to my wife and myself. I shall ever regret that I have not been able to express to her my gratitude and admiration. You see, then, that the hope of a doubtful escape cannot dissipate the sorrow of such a misfortune."

After these words he resumed his reading; then eagerly turning towards me, he said, "Your family are all well; and they shall hear of you. I have just found this in a paragraph which was at first illegible."

"May your Theresa be blessed! may God return to her, in you and through you, the good she has done to me!"

Our thoughts and conversation were now concentrated on this project, the success or failure of which would decide our fate for ever; and the prospect of a whole life of compensation and happiness, or an existence of misery and despair, kept us in a feverish agitation. I will not enlarge on the obstacles we had to surmount, or the various dangers which awaited us in getting out of Spielberg after leaving our cell; neither will I speak of the means invented to overcome the difficulties belonging to the localities and management of this state-prison, lest I should injure those whom the Austrian system destines to the same wretchedness as ours. Suffice it to say, that the watch over us was so strict that our flight could not remain unknown to the authorities longer than an hour; and that, exactly owing to this, we were obliged to have recourse to assistance from without, to facilitate our escape. I will also abstain from relating the ingenious contrivances of Schiller to insure the success of our plans, at the same time sheltering himself from all suspicion of connivance; but I must observe, that he gave proof in this perilous attempt of unshakeable firmness, strict fidelity, and accurate judgment.

All these measures once agreed upon, nothing prevented our being perfectly ready but the necessity of getting rid of our fetters without compromising Schiller, or incurring the necessity of attempting our escape under disadvantage, in order not to be discovered at the daily inspection. As we could only employ the file at the last moment, it was important to seek some safer expedient by which we might be permitted to wait and choose our time.

Confalonieri, who had only one leg shackled, owing to the weakness of the other, succeeded, after numerous trials, in fastening his chain so well under his large pantaloons, that he could walk without the least noise. This was a point of the greatest consequence in my eyes, as it facilitated the flight of my friend. But he, ever generous, did not see the matter thus, and persisted in renouncing the scheme altogether, rather than leave me alone in prison.

What to do in order to free at least one of my feet from the heavy rings which kept them fettered together?

This was the continual subject of our study, and the cause of dreadful uneasiness; for days elapsed, and the time was drawing near when we might in an instant hear of the arrival of our emissary at Brünn. I had frequently attempted to wound myself in the leg, and to lacerate the skin where the chain was fastened; but the doctor turned a deaf ear to my complaints, and ordered me, for a remedy, to keep myself quiet on my pallet. I also often endeavoured to extricate my feet from the anklets, getting nothing from my efforts but pains and bruises. At last, in despair of ridding myself of my irons, in order that I might not prejudice Confalonieri, I had renounced all idea of accompanying him, when a happy accident cut the gordian knot which my subtlety had not been able to unravel.

Returning one day from my walk, I slipped on the first step of the little staircase which led from the platform into the corridor, and I fell so violently, that I was obliged to be carried to our dungeon. The doctor judged from the swelling of my leg, that I had sprained it, and immediately ordered my fetters to be taken off till I was cured. I nearly shouted with joy, but I restrained myself, and addressed in my heart as fervent thanks to God as if I had recovered my liberty.

"We have succeeded at last!" said I to Confalonieri when the doctor had left us: "I am ready now."

"How ready?" answered my friend, with astonishment: "I was, on the contrary, in despair about it."

"Do you think, then, that under such circumstances one cannot perform miracles? If I am not able to go out on two legs, I will drag on with one. Besides, this sprain is not at all serious, and in a few days I shall recover the use of my foot. Make yourself easy. Let them only take off these cursed chains, and you shall see if I will remain behind."

Our conversation had scarcely lasted five minutes, before Schiller entered with the smith.

"The doctor has ordered his irons to be struck off," said Schiller to his friend, pointing to me; "but the operation is difficult: beware that you do not hurt him."

He then gently took my bad foot in his hand and held it upon the portable anvil of the blacksmith, watching, like a mother, that the blows of the hammer might give me the least possible pain. Thanks to his care, I did not suffer much; and when I told him that the sprain, instead of being an obstacle to my flight, was a most fortunate event, the good man was delighted.

In the course of eight days I quitted my bed, and felt quite equal to bear the fatigue of the journey. Confalonieri rejoiced exceedingly, and said to me, "The only wishes that I now form, are for the arrival of him who ought to secure our escape. In a week he will be here."

This period passed away, and our expectation was at its height. I began to walk tolerably well, but the satisfaction I experienced therefrom was more than counterbalanced by the delay of our emissary and the dread of resuming my chains.

One day our bolts grated, and our good jailer entered hastily. In the hope that our anxieties were at an end, I inquired, "Well, Schiller, is he here?"

"Whom do you mean?" he murmured.

"Why, our man."

"I know nothing of him: I have come only to tell you that the Director General of Police is at Spielberg, and that he has questioned me for upwards of four hours. Cursed priest! he spoke the truth: in a few days, to-morrow perhaps, I shall no longer be with you."

"What are you saying, good Schiller? it is a mistake, I have no doubt."

"You shall see. When I told you that there would be a report, you would not believe me: well, was I not right? So I shall be again this time."

"On what did the Director of Police question you?"

"I cannot stop longer, for he will be here immediately to examine the prisoners." And so saying, he went out abruptly, leaving us in dreadful anxiety.

The examination to which the Director of Police subjected some of our companions respecting the insignificant objects found upon them at the time of his visit, lasted several days, and gave rise to a voluminous report, which was sent direct to the Emperor. Yet Schiller was still left to us, and hope began to revive in our breasts, when on bringing our bread to us one morning, he said, "Another than myself will wait upon you to-morrow;" and the tears stood in his eyes as he spoke.

Struck to the heart, as if this sad news had been an unexpected event, I asked him if it was quite certain; to which he answered, "I have received the information officially, with severe reprimands, coming from Vienna, from the Emperor himself. It is very hard at my age, and after having faithfully served my Sovereign for so many years. Ah! what mischief this priest has caused at Spielberg."

"My good friend, no one knows it better than we do, who lose all hope by your removal. Why can we not recompense you for all past benefits, and for the great service you had resolved to do us? God will, perhaps, grant us this pleasure at a future time."

The old man, whose hand I pressed as I uttered these words, gazed sadly in my face, and gently shaking his head, replied, "Thanks, thanks! Ere long I shall cease to want anything in this world: I am hit there;" and he pointed to his breast. "God will not punish me for having had compassion on my poor prisoners. He well knows that if I wished to save you, it was not from interested motives, but because my heart bled to see such brave men as you condemned to perish slowly in a dungeon, through the denunciations of a vile priest. Nor will I abandon you yet," he continued resolutely; "you may depend upon it. If the man comes and brings a letter or any little packet, I will contrive that the guard Fritz shall drop it into your cell by the wicket. Confide in him as in myself. Whatever you give him will be well bestowed, for he has a numerous family. Adieu, gentlemen! think sometimes of old Schiller."

"Adieu, adieu!" I repeated, throwing myself into his arms; "you have been compassionate and charitable to us; you have succoured us when we were hungry: may God reward you!"

"Yes, yes," he rejoined in a tremulous voice; "and if He listen to the prayers of a poor soldier like me, he will move the Emperor's heart in your behalf. Adieu, adieu, my children!" And so saying, he went away.

Too sad at first to communicate to each other what was passing in our minds, we still lamented in silence the irreparable loss we had just sustained, when Schiller returned, bringing us the books we had trusted to his care. On our expressing some reluctance to receive them, lest they might be discovered, and cause him fresh annoyance, the worthy man replied, "I have nothing to fear; I know you would sooner die than compromise one who confides in your honour."

No testimony of esteem, from whatever person it might come, could give me greater satisfaction than I felt at this proof of confidence from that straight-forward man, who risked the tranquillity of the rest of his life in order to procure us some relief. After expressing our gratitude in terms which misfortune alone can suggest, not to grieve him, we consented to keep a pencil, two sheets of paper, and a small German dictionary, begging him to leave the other books with his friend Fritz. After this we embraced, for the last time, in tears.

CHAPTER XV.

THE dismal veil which shrouded our thoughts after the loss of Schiller was raised a little by the news that he would be replaced by the good Krall. Not that we could hope to resume with him our projects of escape; but as he had always shown himself humane and obliging, we trusted that he would continue to soften our misfortune as much as his duty would permit. In a position where the rigour of a subaltern agent in the execution of his orders might reduce us to despair, this conviction was a great consolation.

On my asking Krall whether his appointment was certain, he answered, "Yes, sir; and much against my wish. Poor Schiller! this will cause his death. But I must obey, even though in my heart I feel that what they have done is unjust. Would to God at least that it were my lot to let you out of your prison! To see the happy day of your delivery, I would gladly remain a year longer at Spielberg, far from my mother and my betrothed."

These words fell on my heart like seasonable dew. Compassion is the daughter of Heaven, and through her Providence recalls us to life when our burthen is too heavy and the mind desponds. My courage revived, and I overcame the dejection into which disappointment had plunged me. Seeking some occupation, I adopted the plan of transcribing on the walls of our cell the little German dictionary which Schiller had left me; and with a nail, which I pulled out of my iron-heeled shoes, I immediately began to engrave the first words of the endless vocabulary.

"I have employment for a long time to come," said I to Confalonieri, resting from my laborious chiseling: "my fingers are bruised, and my eyes, already weak, will suffer still more; but the hours pass away. I much regret that your rheumatic pains deprive you of such a solace."

My friend smiled sadly, replying, "There can be no longer any distraction for me; but I always experience a great satisfaction when you find one for yourself."

While I pursued my work, the Count, whom the hope of being useful to his companions could alone divest of his sad thoughts, endeavoured to calm the increasing exasperation of poor Moretti. As we were thus engaged, the Commandant of Spielberg came one day in great haste, bidding me to repair to his office, where the Governor wanted me. On my stating that I still walked with difficulty, and that it would take me some time to obey, he went out, saying that his Excellency would come himself to my cell.

In less than five minutes Count Mitrosky was seated upon a chair beside my bed. He first inquired after my sprain, and then said that he was commissioned by Prince Metternich to read me a letter conveying tidings of my family. At the announcement that I was going for the first time to hear news of my relatives, my heart beat so violently that I could scarcely thank the Governor in audible words.

"The letter is in German," said he, "but I will translate it into French. His Highness directs me to come personally to you, and to make you acquainted with the following extract from a letter of your sister: 'His father and family are all in good health.'"

My eyes, anxiously fixed on the reader, must have told him unequivocally that I expected further information. By way of an answer to my interrogative look, his Excellency gravely folded up the long despatch and replaced it in his pocket, adding, "This is a special favour, for which you are indebted to his Highness."

"I am profoundly grateful," I answered: "the certainty that all my relatives exist is an invaluable comfort in my present misery."

"It has not been my fault that you are not better off: my hands are tied."

"We are not ignorant of it, and we shall ever feel obliged for your good intentions. But our condition is worse than that of the convicts: they go out, whilst we are compelled to remain all day in our dungeon. Could we not obtain permission to work like them in the open air? Our constitutions, already much shattered, would derive some benefit from it, and we should be delivered from the torment of perpetual inactivity. This is a favour which we beg of your Excellency."

"I acknowledge the justice of your request, and I even think it indispensable to save several among you from imminent destruction: but I can take nothing upon myself with regard to the state-prisoners. His Majesty reserves to his own good pleasure everything that regards you. I will make a report to him on the subject, adding all I can in your behalf."

We thanked Count Mitrosky; but when he went away, he brought a smile upon our lips, by assuring us anew that we gave him more trouble than the whole province of Moravia.

This visit of the Governor had formed the subject of our conversation for several days, when a fresh alarm struck us just at the time that, thanks to the intrepidity of Caliban, we had at last resumed our correspondence with Pellico and Maroncelli. I was one morning at the window enjoying the balsamic air of a beautiful day in the month of June, and resting my eyes from the fatigue of attending for many hours to the words that I had scratched on the white walls of our cell. At the sight of the rich mantle of flowers and fertility which nature had resumed, my mind had been absorbed some time in the softening recollections of my country, youth and happiness, when Confalonieri suddenly asked, "Did you not hear something extraordinary in the corridor?"

"No," I replied, still wrapt in my sweet reverie.

"It is perhaps the Director of Police."

At this name I descended and listened, my blood running cold at the idea that the dictionary, of which I had only copied a few pages, was likely to be seized. To avoid being separated from my friend, it was necessary that I should hide this interdicted article from the Police: but there was no possibility. Therefore, after having uselessly attempted to get out of the embarrassment, I awaited in increasing anxiety the coming of our visitors; and when I heard them at the door, I hastily thrust the little book in my bosom.

The first person who appeared, was the Director-General of Police, who stopped a little on the threshold, hat in hand, to do the honours of our prison to a man, from all appearances, of great importance. Advancing towards us, this unknown personage cast his eyes round our cell, and then looked at us, saying in German to the Director of Police, "This is Confalonieri, and the other, the Frenchman, I suppose? Why does not the latter wear irons?"

"By the Doctor's order," answered the Director, "in consequence of a sprain."

"Very well; but the indulgence must not be prolonged too much." And while speaking he continued to examine with great nicety the shabby furniture of our dungeon.

In a few minutes, thought I to myself, they will make us undress.

"What is that for?" he inquired, with a severe look, pointing to a leather pillow which had hitherto been allowed to my sick friend.

"Your Excellency, it was left to the Count when he arrived here on account of his illness, and since then"—

"It is an infraction of the rules," drily returned the stranger.

The Director of Police then whispered a few words which I could not understand, but which appeared to relate to the rigid inspection he had made some time before.

Seeing that they did not proceed to search our persons, I recovered my coolness, and addressing myself to the unknown, to divert his attention from what I so much dreaded, I said to him, "May I make a request, sir?"

He inclined his head in sign of consent.

"We beg to have some daily occupation beneficial to our health. The complete idleness in which we live renders our existence absolutely intolerable. Our petition, already preferred by Count Mitrosky, would doubtless have a greater chance of success if it could receive your support."

"I will make my report to his Majesty," was all the answer that I obtained; but these words were followed, to my great delight, by the departure of his Excellency.

"Thank God!" cried I; "once again we have had a narrow escape." But I soon had to repress my joy, for my poor friend's pillow, the last souvenir of his Theresa, was taken away.

Thus the rigours of our captivity went on increasing; and it was evident that the Emperor, ever uneasy about the execution of his orders, would reduce us to the utmost wretchedness. The person his Majesty had now sent to inspect us was a certain Vogel, one of the four Aulic-counsellors attached to the General Police of the empire. This worthy minion showed himself so anxious to please his master, that he even reproved the officials of Spielberg for permitting our two or three sickly rose-trees to remain on the platform.

Shortly after this visit, I resumed my work with renewed ardour ; and, thanks to the lengthened days and my own perseverance, I soon reached the last lines.

To shorten the interminable hours of the longest days in the year, and avoid the gloomy influence of the dungeon, the greater part of us kept almost constantly at the window, where, in spite of the watchfulness of the sentinels, we could now and then exchange with each other a few words of comfort and affection. The season was delightfully fine, and the air so pure, that the simple view of nature afforded refreshment and delight. Before dawn we went to inhale the morning breeze, and the stars shone long ere our eyes were satiated with the sublime spectacle of a summer's night in a northern region, where the day that closes seems to touch that which is about to rise. To contemplate the beauties of the earth and the heavens was now our only study, our sole and salutary recreation.

All at once our jailers became more vigilant and the sentinels more severe ; I was again put in irons, as well as some other prisoners, whose ill-health ought to have exempted them from such sufferings. The daily inspections were made with the greatest punctuality: everything, in short, indicated that fresh instructions had arrived from Vienna, and that they tended to make our condition worse. For some time we could not explain the reason of this increased rigour. At last, one morning, on seeing a man about to root up the rose-trees on our platform, I asked, "Why do you take away those plants ? Are you ordered to do it ?"

"No, sir; but the priest has arrived, and if he should see them after what that other gentleman has said"—

"Ah, Don Stephano is here!" I exclaimed, accounting immediately for the increased severity with which we were treated. "It is then as a precaution, that you want to tear up these rose-trees?"

"Yes, sir," he answered.

"Well, I recommend you strongly not to do so without previously apprising the Commandant: you might get reprimanded."

The guard suspended his work, and the cherished shrubs were preserved. Two or three days after, Don Stephano sent for me.

"Look here!" he began, pointing to two small volumes; "I have not deceived you: his Majesty grants you books, and very good ones. This is a collection of orisons, and the other, a little treasure from which you can every day learn a prayer. Your foot appears quite well again: the Emperor will be as rejoiced at it as he was sorry for your fall. He always inquires into the minutest details respecting you, my son. But a few days ago he said to me, 'Take care of their souls, and I will look after their bodies.' As to the work for which you asked through the Governor and the Aulic-counsellor Vogel, his Majesty will consider. Yet you had better have addressed yourself to me, who am loaded more and more with the imperial favour. You should see how I am received at Brünn—at the Governor's—the Bishop's! Every door is open to me; and at the convent of the Augustines,—in short, they all vie in paying me attentions. If you saw what dinners!

dishes without end—and all out of respect to me!—such exquisite wines, too!"

His flushed countenance showed, in fact, that he had done honour to the splendid repast which the poor monks had placed before him, to prevent his injuring their convent by his denunciations. Forgetting that the poor man to whom he was recounting his gastronomic enjoyments bore on his thin face the traces of hunger and suffering, Don Stephano continued,—"In short, everything of the best is reserved for me, because I am known to have the confidence of his Majesty; and this circumstance you should not neglect when you make a request. Your work for example,—but let us pass to the reading of some of these prayers. I will give you a little instruction, which you will find of great use in completing your religious education."

Shall I tell the world the nature of this instruction? shall I speak of the innumerable absurdities which Don Stephano uttered, with inconceivable assurance, to men who had too much reverence for the religion he abused to make him feel that he was unworthy and incapable of teaching the simplest of its precepts? I will not: for there are bitter recollections which must scarcely be touched on, lest one should be carried away, even after the lapse of so many years, by a burst of just indignation. But I can assert, that the greatest of all the evils I had to endure at Spielberg was that of being compelled to listen to the word of God from such impure lips, and to see the most sacred of all offices thus profaned.

The presence of this priest was always preceded or followed by some new vexation. A few days after his arrival Moretti rapped sharply at the wall, and said, "I have just seen the Commandant and some other officials taking measures at the top of the parapet. I fear there is something brewing against us: just mount to the window and look."

I perceived, in fact, several persons examining the bastion, and, like Moretti, I shuddered at the idea that we should probably be the victims of some new persecution. Soon afterwards, the appearance of some masons, bringing bricks and scaffolding in great quantity, confirmed our apprehensions. The work was immediately begun; and during that day and several others we contemplated with increasing sadness the men who raised the wall of the parapet, and by degrees concealed the cheering landscape from our view. This barrier of stonework, which an evil genius seemed to have placed between us and nature as a warning that we were to renounce for ever the joys of this world, augmented our wretchedness fearfully, and the health of several of the prisoners sustained an irreparable shock. Confalonieri suffered more from it than any other. As for me, I strove to find a diversion in studying the German words I had written on the walls. My eyes became weaker and weaker; but I was determined on enduring anything to guard myself against despondency.

As we were thus pining, the Commandant came one day to inform us that the Emperor had replied to his Excellency the Governor on the subject of our petition, and that he had been pleased to grant our request.

"God be praised!" I exclaimed: "we shall be allowed to use our limbs and to restore our health. On what work shall we be employed?—handling the shovel or the mattock,—breaking stones or gardening? Pray, speak, sir."

Surprised and embarrassed, the Commandant hesitated to explain himself. At last he informed us that the occupation conceded us by his Majesty was lint-making.

I should have heard it repeated ten times before I could believe it. "Lint-making!" I repeated in astonishment: "what benefit can we derive from such a task, which will compel us to remain seated, whilst it is exercise and air that we implored of the Emperor's humanity? It is, no doubt, a misunderstanding; and I suppose the Governor himself has already remonstrated."

"I am not aware of that," answered the Commandant; "but you may know it very shortly, for his Excellency will come here in a few days. In the meantime I can only execute the orders I have received, and tomorrow you will begin your work."

Moretti, whom the Commandant had also acquainted with the result of our application, called me to the wall and said, "Is this not a continuation of the same system? have I not told you?"

The next day poor Krall, quite ashamed of the duty he had to fulfil, entered our cell, bringing in one hand a scale, and in the other a bundle of old linen. "Gentlemen," he muttered, blushing, "here are your tasks. The Commandant has doubtless informed you that you will have a certain quantity of lint to make daily, and I have come to weigh you each your share."

I could not help remarking, "But this pretended boon is nothing more than an additional penalty."

"Alas! gentlemen, it is no fault of mine: Heaven knows how I wish that I could give you another employment. Have patience; this will not last long."

"If the linen were only clean!" said I; "but every piece of it is disgustingly dirty. Look here, Krall!" and I showed him the rags he had brought. "Where have they been able to collect such filth?"

"At the Great-hospital, sir."

This announcement roused my indignation, and I cried, "I will not make lint, Krall: you may tell the Governor so. As this is a favour granted us, I have the right to decline it."

"Dear sir, that will injure you: 't were better to show signs of good-will now, and complain to his Excellency afterwards."

"Your plan is wise, my good friend, and I will follow it out of regard for you. Yet I should like to know above all things whether this work is obligatory."

"I think so," replied Krall on leaving us.

The Governor postponed his visit to Spielberg, and many weeks elapsed before I could see him. When the opportunity arrived, I said, "The application your Excellency kindly forwarded to the Emperor in our behalf has had a far different result to what we expected. As our constitutions have been shattered and our minds prostrated by an intolerable inactivity, we petitioned for a healthy occupation either in the open air or in some of the workshops. But instead of granting this relief, they have condemned us to a work which compels us to remain immoveable, and to breathe the miasma and the down of stinking linen, without giving the slightest employment to our mind. I have submitted to this new misery, and made exactly each day the quantity of lint required; but I have constantly cherished a hope that your Excellency would come to Spielberg and remedy the evil."

The Governor answered, "You have done well to obey: his Majesty will take into consideration your docility, and grant, I hope, a task more suitable to your wants. I preferred your request as favourably as possible, but Don Paolowitz has meddled in the matter, and his advice has probably prevailed. However I will again endeavour to enlighten his Majesty on this point, and induce him to give you a further proof of his clemency."

After this, as he kindly inquired whether I had any other favour to ask, I resumed, "Your Excellency without doubt knows that, after having remained some months deprived of books, we have lately received from the Chaplain two little volumes of prayers." The Governor nodded affirmatively. "These prayers do not offer reading of any duration or variety: besides which, they are written in Italian, and I cannot pray as I desire except in my native tongue. I hope I shall not trespass too much on your Excellency's kindness in begging you to obtain of the Emperor some good religious books written in French, such as the Bible, the Histoire des Variations by Bossuet, the works of Bourdaloue, or those of Fénélon. This will be conferring upon me an invaluable benefit, for which I shall be eternally grateful."

"I will do what you desire," replied the Governor; "and I will do it personally, for I shall go to Vienna in a few days. I hope I may be more fortunate than before."

"Whatever be the result of the step which your Excellency is good enough to take in my behalf, I shall feel equally obliged."

I formed ardent wishes that my petition might be granted; for I wanted, by the assistance of these books, to dissipate my doubts respecting the truth of some dogmas of the Catholic Church, and to combat a strong inclination I felt to range myself under the banners of Protestantism. More and more scandalized at the abuses and intolerable licence which Don Stephano permitted himself in the exercise of his functions, and especially at the confessional,—disgusted at his insensibility and intolerance, I could not help comparing the baseness, falseness, ignorance, and vanity of this Catholic priest with the modest frankness, the great learning, and the charity of the Protestant pastors whom I had known and visited at Geneva. I was naturally brought to inquire into the causes of this difference, and I thought I found them, not in the character or position of the individuals, but in the principles and institutions of their respective religions.

Catholicism, in refusing liberty of examination, and exacting from the faithful an entire obedience to the prescriptions of an authority, the origin of which I thought too human to be infallible, appeared to me contrary to true piety, and tending to engender in the mind hypocrisy, littleness, and servility; whilst Protestantism, in addressing itself to the reason for the interpretation of Scripture and submission to its precepts, seemed to me to comprehend better the nature of man as well as his duty to God. But this opinion was only based on recollections, doubts, and suppositions; and it was this above all that made me so anxiously await the moment when I should be able to obtain from the Bible the light of Revelation, and profit by the assistance of some great interpreter, such as Bossuet or Fénélon. This moment I thought had arrived, when Count Mitrosky, immediately after his return from Vienna, came to see me.

"I have made your application to his Majesty," he hastened to say to me: "he listened with the greatest kindness, and answered with the most gracious benignity that the petition appeared to him just, but that the matter required consideration, and he would let me know his decision before my return. Some days after I had another audience of the Emperor, and he was the first to resume the subject, which he did as follows. 'I have thought of the prisoner Andryane, and of the works which he wishes to read. It is a very delicate question. Bossuet and Fénélon are almost prohibited in my states; and as for the Bible it is dangerous reading, in which enthusiasts only seek materials for controversy and heresy. I have consulted the Court-chaplain, and have directed him to choose for the Frenchman a good work, which you will carry to the prisoner Andryane from me.' Having thanked his Majesty, I repaired to Don Stephano, who gave me three small books for you. Here they are."

On opening these volumes I found them to consist of short meditations and prayers by Father Chapuis, a Jesuit, whose name I had never heard. I placed them on the table, replying to the Governor, "I return thanks to your Excellency for the interest you have kindly taken in this affair; but I certainly would not have given you so much trouble, if I had thought that religious authors such as Fénélon and Bossuet are prohibited in Austria."

"I hoped for better success," resumed the Governor: "I employed every means in my power, I assure you. But the intentions of the Emperor are always paternal, and you must think that he, in his wisdom, judges that Father Chapuis will best suit the wants of your soul."

He then turned to the Commandant of Spielberg, and added, "You will only give one volume at a time to the prisoner Andryane: it is his Majesty's order."

CHAPTER XVI.

Having heard nothing of Don Stephano or the Director of Police for three or four months, we recovered a little our confidence, and endeavoured to refresh our minds by resuming our correspondence. A few notes from Pellico caused some diversion from the anxiety occasioned by the inexplicable privation of every kind of news from Italy. Schiller would not have failed to send it to us had any arrived; for the worthy man had kept his word, and by means of his comrade had given us proofs of his continued devotion. But his health was failing: it was easy to see this by his dragging steps, his frightful thinness, and his long bent form; and the affront he had received had contributed to wear out his vital energies. I was especially struck by the alteration of his countenance one day, when I perceived him sunning himself in the angle of the lower bastion, and I thought with grief that Death would soon snatch him away. Alas, a few days after he was no more!

The arrival of Don Stephano roused us again from our tranquillity. Having no longer any loss to fear, or work to be interrupted, I received the announcement of his return with a sort of pleasure, and I awaited impatiently the moment when I should be sent for by him, determined that he should hear from me the energetic language of misfortune.

"Bravo!" he cried on seeing me; "you apply to the Governor for religious books! It is as if a soldier were to solicit a Bishop for works on the art of war,—ha, ha! and you thought his Majesty would be taken in by this cunning! Well, sir, what have you gained?"

"What harm have I done in asking for pious works written in my own language?"

"What harm?" repeated Don Stephano angrily: "do you reckon as nothing having chosen Fénélon and the Bible,—Fénélon, that independent and almost schismatical spirit?"

"But Bossuet, Bourdaloue," I observed—

"Could be of no use in your position. Besides it is I whom you ought to have consulted and charged with your request. Then, perhaps, it might have been granted. However, the Emperor, whose clemency is inexhaustible, has sent you, through Count Mitrosky, a book of prayers, which is said to be a master-piece in its way. I hope you have been touched to the very soul by such a favour. His Majesty is well disposed towards you, young man."

I looked at Don Stephano, repeating with a surprised and incredulous tone, "Well disposed!—when our condition becomes daily more miserable, and we are reduced to regret the commutation of our sentence!—when a wall has been raised to deprive us even of the view of nature!"

"The Emperor is anxious for your salvation: he desires that you should see nothing but heaven, and that you should think of it alone."

I was about to ask Don Stephano whether he spoke seriously; but his countenance expressed so much assurance and piety while he uttered these words, that I felt convinced he was in earnest.

"Does it not seem to you," I resumed, "that mildness and charity would go more directly to the hearts of those who are suffering and lead their thoughts heavenward, than this extreme rigour, which can only tend to make them lose faith in Providence? The occupation we solicited as a relief has been turned into a new punishment. We hoped that we should be permitted to work in the open air like the common convicts, and we are obliged to remain seated for hours together to ravel out the threads of pieces of linen, the sight of which alone raises disgust."

"My son, in allowing you this work, his Majesty believed he was treating you according to your tastes; for, on hearing that you were not satisfied with the favour granted, he said, 'What do they complain of? *are they not philanthropists?*' "

The ironical smile of the Chaplain proved to me that he understood the full meaning of these sad words. "Besides," he hastened to add, "those who get tired of working for the sake of humanity will soon have another employment: they will be compelled to knit."

"I must declare to you that the weakness of my eyes will prevent me from making lint as well as knitting."

"Take heed, my son! His Majesty may be offended at such a determination, unless the physician affirms"—

"If I could appeal to the Emperor himself"—

"You have the means, my dear son. I am authorized by him to receive and lay your request at his feet."

"It often happens that our words are not reported with exactness, even by those who have the best intentions towards us. A phrase misinterpreted is sometimes enough to give a different meaning to a whole discourse. I shall therefore never venture"—

"Let not that prevent you: I am also empowered to write under dictation the secrets confided to me, and to submit them to his Majesty."

The eagerness of the Chaplain having convinced me that he hoped for some important disclosure, I was on the point of giving up the idea of sending my application; but I felt too anxious to dissipate any doubts that might still linger as to the real intentions of the Sovereign, not to seize the opportunity of enlightening his conscience. I therefore dictated to Don Stephano a few lines, which depicted to the Emperor the tortures of our captivity.

"I shall not write any such words," cried the Chaplain, laying down the pencil: "tortures!—it is not so. Nothing is done without his Majesty's precise commands; and he takes care of you really like a father. Suppose he had allowed you to be hanged—were you not condemned?"

"State-reasons may, I am willing to admit, justify in some degree in the eyes of a Sovereign the execution of so arbitrary a sentence as was pronounced upon me; but I cannot conceive why a powerful monarch should destroy by a slow death a poor foreigner whose only crime is reduced in the eyes of the law—"

"You are guilty,—or, at any rate, you intended to be so," interrupted Don Stephano angrily; "and with his Majesty this is the same thing."

"I should not have murmured against the Emperor had he left me for execution, because he might have been deceived by the Inquisitor; but now that he knows all the details of my trial, it is difficult for me not to accuse him of excessive severity, if it be true that all we have to endure emanates from himself. I therefore demand to protest to him, that this captivity of Spielberg is a thousand times more cruel than death, and that the commutation of such an incarceration for capital punishment would be a favour to me."

Don Stephano, after having for a long time resisted what he called my exaggerated complaints, ended by writing what I most wished to make known, assuring me that he would not fail to submit it to the consideration of the Emperor. To this application, from which I was far from expecting a favourable result, Don Paolowitz brought me the following answer some months afterwards:—

"His Majesty has read what you dictated to me, exactly as I wrote it down upon this table. Nothing will be changed as to the regulations of the prison; that is the first point. With reference to you, he said that you are only here as an example to frighten any scoundrels of foreigners who might attempt to revolutionize his provinces. To this he added, in his extreme clemency, that he would not forget you."

Don Stephano then announced that he had procured several books, amongst which was the *Philothée de Saint François de Sales*; and he told me besides that he should introduce to us a young ecclesiastic of Brünn, who had been appointed his assistant, and perhaps would even replace him altogether before long.

The *Philothée* is a pious work, dictated by the most tender love of man, but utterly unfit to settle any religious doubts. As to the young priest who accompanied Don Stephano, he made a favourable impression by his gentle countenance and the modesty of his behaviour; but he did not venture to speak a word in the presence of his superior. Meanwhile our existence became more and more intolerable, and knitting was substituted in the place of lint-making. A ball of coarse, oily, and stinking worsted, together with five wooden needles, was brought to each state-prisoner, and one of the jailers was ordered to teach us to knit socks such as were worn by the convicts. This occupation doubtless requires not much skill; yet the apprenticeship was long and difficult to several of us. I had learned to knit, and got on very well till I came to the heel; but on reaching this point I was puzzled, and in spite of all my endeavours was never able to make an entire sock. This occasioned vexations without end, and reports were despatched to Vienna representing my inaptitude as obstinacy and ill-will.

Not daring to converse from the windows, lest we should be sent to the casemates, we sought to console Moretti under this privation by resorting to our mural language. All at once the poor Colonel was conducted to another dungeon far from us,—a blow from which he never recovered. Week followed week, and the monotony of our life was undisturbed by anything except the frequent perquisitions of the Director-General of Police. Wearied by this state of inaction and the overwhelming reveries by which I was continually absorbed, I sought some occupation in tracing on the walls of our cell all the English words I could remember; thus hoping also to prevent my entirely forgetting a language for which I had a particular affection. From single words I went on to the text of favourite authors, and, by a concatenation of ideas, to passages which again recalled others to my recollection; so that at last I was able to make out whole cantos of Milton and Byron. To the English quotations I added such quantities of Latin and Italian, that, to economize space, I was obliged to write everywhere with the head of a needle, and so finely that the lines were scarcely perceptible. These fruits of my patience caused not only a suspension of suffering, but were a source of gratification and pride. Every time I passed them in review, I experienced a feeling of complacency and exultation like that of a miser when going over his treasures. It is impossible to conceive my amazement at the sudden announcement that I must remove to another dungeon. "Such is the will of his Majesty," said the Commandant of Spielberg; "we cannot help it."

A few days afterwards Krall told us that poor Villa was worse. A report had been sent to Vienna, in order that a consultation might be allowed; but it only took place to discover that all hopes were vain, and that he had only a few days to live. The worthy Don Marco, with tears in his eyes, stood constantly at his bedside, either offering to Heaven the most fervent prayers, or striving to appease the remorse of poor Villa, who could not pardon himself for having caused the ruin of the devoted friend, who assisted him at once with the solicitude of a mother and the charity of a minister of Christ.

One consolation was in store for the unfortunate prisoner. Four days before his death, the Director-General of Police waited on him to say, that the Emperor granted him permission to write his last wishes to his parents. Villa at first made no answer; but afterwards, collecting his ideas and his strength, he dictated a sort of will, addressed to his father and mother, entreating their pardon for the grief he had occasioned them, recommending each of his servants to their care, and imploring that, when Don Marco should recover his liberty, they should treat him as their own son.

After this touching reparation, which appeared to have relieved his heart from an oppressive burden, Villa prepared himself to die like a good Christian. When Don Stephano, who hastened from Vienna to attend him, tried to revive his courage, by saying that they were going to remove him to Brünn and set him free, he replied, "It is no longer a question of this world for me. Captivity and want of nourishment have consumed my life. It is for the last journey, father, that you must prepare me." In fact, the agony of death soon began; and Villa, trusting in God and forgiving man, breathed his last sigh in the arms of Don Marco.

The day after this melancholy event, I was taking my usual walk on the platform, when the rumbling of wheels attracted my attention. I advanced hastily towards the parapet, and perceived in the second enclosure of the bastions the tumbrel of the dead, followed and drawn by convicts, some of whom carried shovels and pick-axes.

"Is it Villa they are carrying to the cemetery?" I asked of my guard.

"Yes, sir, it is he."

My hat, which I had taken off to pay the last homage to the mortal remains thus removed, fell from my hands, while my lips muttered a few blessings, and my breast heaved with sighs. A burst of laughter from some of the convicts made me shudder with horror. Meanwhile the cart rolled slowly to the angle of the bastion, where it disappeared; a quarter of an hour after, it again came forth at the foot of the citadel, in the road leading to the burial-ground.

"They are about to enter the cemetery," said my phlegmatic guard: "do you see?" And a few moments after, he added, "They are digging the grave; in five minutes it will be done."

I saw nothing, for my sight was too weak; but my imagination was so excited, that methought I perceived and heard the first shovelfull of earth fall on the corpse. The impression was most painful, and, hiding my face in my hands, I began to weep.

"Pooh! you must not afflict yourself thus," exclaimed the keeper; "that is where we must all go."

"It is true," I answered; "but others are accompanied to their resting-place by relatives and friends, while we—"

"You are right," interrupted the guard: "if I were told that I should not be buried in the churchyard of my village, I should weep as you do."

The same day I was sent for by Don Stephano. While expressing his regret for the premature end of Villa, he said, "The poor fellow has died from want of courage."

"Say rather from want of food and air," I replied. "We shall all perish, if this severity does not relent. Our strength is worn out, and we have nothing left but to envy the fate of the departed."

"Calm yourself, my son. Who knows what may happen? I am ignorant of his Majesty's intentions; but your conduct may merit his clemency. Besides, you are a foreigner. Do not despair: some day or other your condition may improve. We shall see. Our gracious Emperor does not forget you: take courage; much depends on yourself."

Don Stephano bade me adieu in so friendly a tone, and so different a manner from his usual habit, that I remained some time in a state of vague uneasiness, seeking to explain to myself this sudden change. The sorrow and regret with which we were seized by the death of Villa still filled our souls, when a new grief assailed us, owing to the dismissal of the kind-hearted Krall. The Director of Police had found two or three pins in the possession of some of the state-prisoners; the Emperor was informed of this important discovery, and our superintendent was sent away as guilty of negligence. The moment in which our good Krall came to see us for the last time was painful and sad. He had shown himself so humane in the exercise of his functions, so much above his position, by his sentiments and mind, that we felt for him very sincere esteem and gratitude. This poor soldier was one of the best men I ever knew, and he deserved to hold a more honourable place in society.

"Farewell!" said he, bursting into tears: "the day when I hear of your being set at liberty will be one of the happiest of my life. May God grant it soon!"

"You have been our benefactor, Krall: would that we could at some future time acknowledge your kindness better than by mere words!"

"Do not speak of that, sir. Any other in my place would have done the same. If the Emperor knew you as well as I do!—He will some day, and then I am sure he will take pity on you. When I am among our mountains, with my mother and Hanna, I shall relate to them all you have suffered; they will weep and pray for you."

Saying these words he departed, leaving us with the bitter regret of having lost him.

Subjected every day to some new persecution, without having any mitigation to hope from the Emperor, our prospects could scarcely have been more depressing; yet despair did not entirely seize our hearts, for being two we still derived incalculable comfort from our mutual affection. When sadness overcast my soul, Confalonieri, forgetting his own sufferings and attempting to smile, endeavoured to revive my spirits, either by starting some interesting subject of conversation, or giving me some literary task to perform. Alas! I was doomed to be deprived of this consolation also. One day the Commandant of Spielberg entered our dungeon with a paper in his hand, saying, "I regret, gentlemen, that I have only sorrowful news to tell you, but you must separate. It is his Majesty's will that the prisoner Andryane shall immediately be removed to another cell. Here is the order."

"Shall I at least be alone?" I hastened to inquire.

"No, sir; you will have a companion," he replied.

"Who is it?" I asked anxiously.

"You will soon know."

"But we cannot be forced to live together against our will. I wish to be alone. Pray ask this of the Governor in my name."

"It is useless; his Excellency cannot interfere. The order comes direct from the Emperor, and it is too positive for any one to dare to suspend its execution. Count Mitrosky, besides, is gone to Vienna, where he has been appointed Minister of the Interior. Have, therefore, the goodness to follow me without any further objection."

I threw myself into Confalonieri's arms, and remained speechless, without shedding a tear.

"Compose yourself," said my friend, pressing me to his bosom, "compose yourself, in the name of Heaven! This cruel separation is a favourable omen for you; it evidently shows that the Emperor does not put us in the same category, and that your fate will not be"—

"This consolation," I replied, "which your generous friendship seeks to inspire at such a moment, makes me feel more painfully still all that I lose in you."

"Sir, I am waiting for you," cried the Commandant, who was already outside the door.

"Adieu! adieu!" I exclaimed, sobbing; and overwhelmed with despair, I followed my guide, without thinking to ask him with whom I was to be placed; but he stopped, and said, "You are going to be put with S——."

"With Moretti's old companion?" I inquired, on hearing this name. "I will not go; I prefer being alone for ten years, even for twenty if necessary. I would rather be loaded with irons like those condemned to the *carcere durissimo.*"

"Take notice that I shall be obliged to use force, and afterwards to send a report to his Majesty. Submit; I advise you to do so for your own sake."

Knowing too well the uselessness of persevering in a resolution prompted by grief and indignation, I followed, and in a few minutes I stood before my new fellow-prisoner. My heart was filled with disgust, for Moretti had repeatedly told us at the wall that he believed S—— to be an intolerable hypocrite and a traitor.

CHAPTER XVII.

Accustomed as I was to the miseries of a prison, never, do I think, had I experienced a feeling more painful than now, on finding myself in this narrow cell, in the presence of a man on whom such hateful suspicions rested. I remained close to the door, unable to move a step or utter a word. My very eyes seemed dimmed by a film, which rendered them incapable of distinguishing anything; and when Judge S——, rising from his seat, slowly approached me and offered his hand, I started with surprise and affright, as if a phantom had suddenly met my view.

"The prison is none of the best," he said: "you seem overcome by its dreary aspect. Indeed it is, I believe, the most wretched of all; but, by God's help, you will gradually get accustomed to it."

"I shall exist here, sir," I replied, "as I did in that which I have left. None of us, alas! are in our apprenticeship at Spielberg: but I admit this dungeon is the most dismal I have yet seen. However, I continued, forcing myself to restrain my repugnance to my new companion, "there is no dungeon which will not become tolerable to persons who endeavour to live in harmony."

S—— half smiled as he turned his scrutinizing eyes upon me, and then suddenly fixed them on the ground. Whether he sought to read in my face if my words were sincere, or concealed some covert allusion to the discord between himself and Moretti, I was unable to ascertain.

"These continual changes from one companion to another," resumed S——, after a short pause, "are very distressing, particularly to one like myself, for my deplorable health makes me continually fearful of becoming an object of inconvenience, if not of disgust, to my fellow-prisoner. I have protested against these short-lived unions; I have earnestly requested to be placed by myself, but they have paid no attention to me. Grant then your indulgence, and believe that I sincerely lament not being allowed to bear by myself the infirmities with which God has visited my captivity."

The dreadful suffering depicted on every feature of this man, upon whom imprisonment had done the work of time, immediately inspired me with compassion, and I thought only of the ills he must have undergone to have been reduced to such a state of exhaustion.

"I am aware," said I, taking his hand, "that you have been afflicted with much illness, of which you still feel the effects; but who is there among us who had not himself to ask indulgence of his fellow-prisoners? I only hope that your infirmities will not prevent you, one day or other, and that not long hence, from again rejoining your wife and children."

These words went to the heart of S——: he burst into tears, and replied, "Ah, my children, my poor children! when will the hour come that I may again clasp them in my arms? There are six of them, and I was their only support; the eldest was but a child when I was arrested. The thought that they were left without a protector in the world would have hurried me to the tomb, had not Providence taken pity upon us."

As he uttered these last words, in a broken and stifled voice, he threw himself upon his knees and prayed fervently. Touched with the sight of a father, loaded with chains, imploring Heaven, within the vaults of a dungeon, to restore him to his children, I asked myself if it were possible that duplicity and treachery could dwell in the same heart with such pious sentiments. But repressing my first emotions, I determined to act with reserve, and watch the new comrade the Emperor had imposed upon me.

The jailers having brought my bed, I threw myself upon it, and yielded myself unconstrainedly to sorrow and regret. I could not but look upon this as the most unhappy day of my captivity; it had separated me from a friend in the fullest sense of the word, from a very father, ever ready to alleviate the rigours of my captivity. I repined at it bitterly; the more so when I compared him with the man before me, from whom I could not help foreboding evil every time I cast a stealthy glance on his ambiguous physiognomy. In vain did I try to repel from my mind the painful doubts caused by the impression of duplicity and treachery visible on his emaciated features. Instead of a life of confidence and expansion, instead of that never-failing sympathy with which Confalonieri gave me energy to sustain my trials, I had now in prospect a continual state of suspicion and alarm, obliging me to weigh every word and conceal every thought,—a restraint which within the walls of a prison is the most intolerable of all evils.

To languish thus in distrust and dissimulation was so contrary to my habits, that I felt an irresistible desire to clear the matter at once by frankly putting the question to S——; but as I was about to address him, the sad and icy expression of his features, which seemed as if risen from the tomb to spy the living, checked upon my lips the appeal I was about to make to his conscience.

Falling back upon my straw, I remained there for many hours absorbed in melancholy broodings, and even weeping. From this violent paroxysm of grief I only recovered at the close of day: I then began coolly to consider the causes and the probable aim which had determined my present companionship, in order thereby to regulate my conduct. It appeared to me that two motives could alone have induced the Emperor to associate me with the confidant of Don Stephano; first, the hope of discovering through him either my own secrets or those Confalonieri might have confided to me; the second, to become thoroughly acquainted with my character, the bent of my mind, and thus adjudge my fate, not from mere appearances, but positive facts. Prejudiced as I was against my companion, there was little fear of my committing any indiscretion; all I had to effect was to gain his individual good opinion, and here was the peril and the difficulty, for he had already known me at a time when there was no cause for mistrusting him. I therefore resolved, after much hesitation, to throw aside all disguise, except in anything relating to the policy of the Emperor, whose name I determined never to mention.

Quieted after having thus fixed my line of proceeding, and exhilarated by the imprudent conviction that I should deceive the deceiver, and come out of this trial victorious, I arose towards evening, and with the intention of removing any ill impression caused by my gloomy silence, I said to him, "I am sure you will pardon me for having given way to this morose taciturnity throughout the day. In our wretched situation, we cannot quit a friend, from whom we have for years received the tenderest marks of affection, without bitter regret. When two persons love each other as Confalonieri and I do, when they have dreaded the same death, sustained the same persecution, and believed themselves destined for ever to the same doom, they are not separated at once without suffering acutely and for a long time."

"Your grief is too natural and too much to be respected for me to take offence: Christ has himself taught us, by the tears he shed on learning the death of Lazarus, that it is our duty to mourn the loss of our friends; nevertheless we must submit to the decrees of Heaven."

"Alas!" I replied, "Christ regained his friend by restoring him to life; but I am doubtless separated from mine for ever."

"You love Confalonieri then?"

"That I have borne up against the miseries of Spielberg, and preserved my mental faculties, my resignation and a glimmer of hope in my heart, I owe alone to him. I cherish him as a benefactor. My esteem for him increased daily, for each day brought something to convince me of the truth of his character, the elevation of his mind, his moderation and modesty."

"Confalonieri moderate! Confalonieri modest!" interrupted S——; "these virtues are certainly not attributed to him often, and the little that I have seen of him here has not shown him free from the sin which ruined the angels and our first parents—pride."

I rejoined with emphasis, "S——, do not form a rash and unjust opinion of a man whom I revere, and who has no other fault in my eyes than that of thinking far more of others than himself. Do you know in what his pride consists? I will tell you; it consists in never saying or doing anything contrary to his conscience, and acting with the strictest honour in all things and at all times, in the mystery of a dungeon as well as in the open ordeal of a trial. In a word, it is his pride that no one can produce an instance wherein, to alleviate present or future evils, he has for a moment forgotten his dignity. If this be a sin in your opinion, I have only to say that I regret with all my soul that I do not merit your reproach so well as the Count."

"Well, well, he is a hero, a saint, if you like."

From the angry tone in which S—— spoke these words, I perceived, too late, that in doing justice to my friend I had humiliated his detractor. The whole night was passed in devising means to avert the personal enmity of my susceptible companion; but after a lengthy and painful meditation, I remained more than ever convinced that I was in a labyrinth from which no clue could save me. The first few days, therefore, were embarrassing and irksome; and though we reciprocated those little acts of politeness which men of good breeding naturally show to each other in such a situation, I found it impossible to look with any patience at the hypocritical face of S——, who with joined hands prayed throughout the greater part of the day, while his heart, I feared, was overflowing with gall and perfidy. Yet he could smile, and join in the conversations which I constrained myself to hold with him, in order to dissipate the idea that he was an object of suspicion; and when I talked of his children, tears would glisten in his eyes. As he spoke too of the times when, as a judge, he had passed sentence upon the fate and fortunes of his fellow-countrymen, I saw that he felt proud of these recollections of honour and integrity, and that he was rejoiced when I told him it was well known throughout Lombardy that in the districts formerly subjected to his jurisdiction everybody regretted him. My suspicion at such moments would be lulled, and I felt ready to disclose all that I had on my mind, adding, that it was unnatural for a magistrate so irreproachable to become an informer, that we felt we were wrong in doubting him, and that a single word would reinstate him in my opinion.

But at the slightest word or sign which hinted that I was about attempting to raise the sad veil of the present, the bilious countenance of the prisoner, which these honourable recollections had for a moment lighted up, immediately relapsed into its usual gloom. The voice of reason convinced me that it was too late to regenerate by frankness and repentance the fallen being, who had been at the last moment unequal to his trial. For I was satisfied, both by previous circumstances and by what escaped from S—— himself, that the unhappy man had been true to his companions in misfortune until the moment when Don Stephano had been sent by the Emperor to subject his conscience to the most dangerous temptation.

The ordeal was dreadful to a captive weakened by long imprisonment, and that captive a dying father, menaced in everything most dear to him. Contemplating this poor victim of corrupt power, who was now despoiled of honour, while he would have come out pure from the trials of misfortune had he been spared this unnatural conflict, though his fall was fatal to us, I could not help being moved to compassion. Without doubt he was to be commiserated, and I should have manifested my sympathy had I discovered in him the least trace of regret. But months had passed since his first transgression, he had become habituated to the tortuous paths of treachery and shame, and his soul could feel nothing but hatred against those who had not fallen like himself, or fear that he might not reap the fruits of his odious compact.

This life became to me hourly more intolerable; the mere recollection of it chills my soul. Winter approached, the days were short, and our prison so dark that I had great difficulty in reading a few lines of the books given me by Don Stephano. Sometimes, to relieve my mind from the gloom of the dungeon, I sprang up to the window to breathe the fresh air and gaze upon the sky, now as dark and heavy as my soul. Then, when tired and cramped by holding the window-bars, I dropped down into my prison, and paced backwards and forwards, until my companion, kneeling to recite his orisons, stopped my way: thus compelled to sit still, I was haunted by the harrowing thought, that treason was brooding beneath those prayers, and that absolution, according to his Catholic notions, could wash out all the iniquities of his heart. So passed my time; no intellectual employment abridged its painful duration.

One day, as I was clinging at the window-bars, I heard at no great distance a soft voice repeating what seemed to be verses.

"Is not that Maroncelli?" I asked of S——.

"Yes," he answered; "doubtless he is repeating some new poem of his to Pellico."

I listened more attentively, and in one of the pauses I began to whistle a favourite air.

"Continue, Alexander," said Maroncelli, as the last sound died away: "Silvio requests that you will; he would ask you himself, but his excessive weakness prevents his climbing up."

Without replying, I recommenced the tune, and should have passed whole hours of that day in thus conversing with my friends, if my companion had not said with some ill-humour a few minutes afterwards, "Do you not feel it very cold?"

"Tomorrow," I instantly murmured to Maroncelli, without exhibiting the slightest sign of displeasure to my interrupter. And I heard Silvio repeat feebly from the depth of the dungeon, "Tomorrow!"

"To judge by his voice, poor Pellico must be very weak," I said to S——; "you saw him lately at mass, what did you think of his health?"

"He has suffered, like all of us," answered S——, with emotion; "but I do not believe there is any fear for his life; if, however, his captivity be prolonged, he may after all follow Oroboni and Villa."

"Then will there be one more righteous man called to Heaven!"

"Ah, that there will!" exclaimed my companion; "and no one would regret his loss more than I should."

These words, pronounced with a tone of sincerity, made me forget the harsh way in which he had given me to understand that our conversation annoyed him.

On the morrow and the following days we continued to exchange a few words, to recite verses, or to whistle softly snatches of our national airs. This solace, together with the continual efforts which I made to please my companion, in rendering our existence more tolerable, led me to hope that nothing might happen to trouble our good understanding. I even flattered myself that I should at last neutralize the irascibility of his character, and that, when he knew more of me, he would abandon all idea of doing me harm.

I was one day in one of those moods of compassion, wherein the heart, softened, revokes the judgments of reason; I had spoken to S—— of his children, of his father, who was as old as mine; our emotion had been mutual, our tears had flowed together. Still full of these touching recollections, I had seated myself, with my face buried in my hands, in order to indulge more freely in the thoughts to which they gave rise, when the arrival of the Director of Police disturbed my meditation.

He entered our dungeon, and pried into every corner, but always treating me with politeness, and even ordering that I should be spared the humiliation of a personal search, while he made my companion strip himself to his last article of clothing. Whether this difference of treatment was the result of accident or design I know not, but I plainly saw by the countenance of S—— that he felt it keenly.

"I will open the window," I said as soon as the Director of Police left us; "the dust here is enough to stifle one." And as I proceeded to admit some fresh air into the cell, S—— cried angrily, "Are you then so gratified by the preference of the Director that you cannot see I am naked? are you in such haste to renew your chattering with Pellico? I have had enough of that,—do you understand? My patience is worn out, and I will not have the window opened."

As he spoke these words he rushed towards me with so much violence that I thought at the moment we should have come to blows. His lips were livid, his cheeks ashy pale, his eyes fiery and fixed; rage seemed trembling in every nerve. I looked at him, and without moving a muscle or raising my voice, I said, "To see you in this fury, who would believe that you were a

Christian? What have I done to deserve what you have said? If fresh air displease you, let us remain in the dust; I have no objection."

His features contracted, his face became by turns purple, pale, livid. He mastered his passion, and falling at my feet, he cried, "Yes, yes, I am unworthy to be a Christian! Have pity upon me, I am a miserable wretch, and I will remain here until you pardon me."

He wept; I raised him up and embraced him. But I felt, as my lips touched his burning cheeks, that I should pay dear for his mortification.

After this afflicting scene, which had fully revealed to me how much pride and jealousy rankled in the heart of my companion, it would have been folly to nurse the hope of dissipating his ill-will toward me. Although he daily showed himself more humble and more polite, he only excited my repugnance and disgust. The veil had been removed, and I beheld in all its naked deformity that conscience wherein the most holy things were unscrupulously mingled with the worst broodings of duplicity and treason. His prayers and orisons had become so unbearable to my sight and hearing, that I was obliged, whenever he knelt down, to throw myself on my mattress and feign slumber, or to mount to the window, lest my indignation should burst out. When my patience was on the point of being exhausted, I called Pellico and Maroncelli, in order that they might pour peace and tranquillity into my soul. This resource became still more efficacious, when Don Marco, who had been separated from Moretti and placed in a cell near ours, joined in our conversation.

Maroncelli asked him what news he had to tell us, "As to myself," he replied, "I am well, with the exception of some slight ailments."

"Don Marco!" I interrupted, "Don Marco!"

"Who calls me?" he replied.

"One who has long desired to express all his sympathy for you,—the Frenchman."

"I am very happy to hear your voice," he cried; "ever since I saw you in the chapel, I have felt a lively interest and affection for you."

I was about to reply, when the sentinel imposed silence. We had, however, become so expert in the art of talking in an under-tone, that rarely a day passed but we enjoyed several quarters of an hour in this way. There was something so simple and charitable in the sentiments and conversation of Don Marco, that I was never tired of listening to him. I thus found the most healthful example and encouragement in Pellico and Don Marco, who taught me how faith and the love of God sustain man in misfortune; and I became more patient with S——, and more resigned to my fate. But it seemed decreed that no consolation was to be permanent. A new person, chosen and sent by the Emperor to superintend the state-prisoners of Spielberg, all at once put an end to our conversations. The Commandant introduced him to us as M. Wergrat. He was a little, corpulent man, with a twinkling eye and merry face: he spoke French to us, and pretended he did not know a word of Italian. They then narrowly inspected the cell, our books, the clothes we wore, the worsted and knitting-needles, the miserable furniture of our dungeon, and even the rings of our chains; everything, in short, was examined, counted, and weighed. After this our Superintendent bowed to us as gracefully as his dwarfish form would permit, and left us.

"From some of his expressions," I remarked to my companion, "I am sure that M. Wergrat speaks Italian as well as you or I do: his arrival is a bad omen; it bodes that our captivity has yet many years to last, which, for most of us, is equivalent to a sentence of death."

"I had already heard something about his coming from our Chaplain," replied S——; "and I do not think his Majesty has any intention in this proceeding further than to distinguish us from the common convicts."

"Then Don Stephano forewarned you of him?"

"Forewarned me, no; he only spoke of it as a measure which would be very advantageous."

"Advantageous in what, may I ask?"

"Why, for instance, there will always be some one here to whom we can make any complaints, and who will do us justice."

"Indeed! complain to the creatures of the Emperor, eh? it seems to me now on the contrary"—On observing my companion turn deadly pale, I quickly added, to disperse the storm which was imminent, "However, be the mission of this official what it may, the simplest plan is not to trouble ourselves about it, to conduct ourselves just as we did before, and leave the rest to the care of Providence. We cannot, at any rate, be worse than we are: let us hear what Don Marco thinks about it."

"What! continue your conversations?" cried S——: "are you not afraid that they may be reported to M. Wergrat, or that he may himself surprise you?"

"And what if he does? if he is sent from Vienna for our welfare, he cannot see any harm in our amusing ourselves so innocently; and, besides, I would prefer even exposing myself to some unpleasantness rather than deny myself this solace."

I immediately called Don Marco, but despite the precaution I took that my voice should be heard by him alone, my first words were answered by a loud "Silence! silence!" from both the sentinels on the bastion at once. A few minutes after I again attempted it, but in vain. I then whistled, and was again thwarted by a cry of "Silence!" more imperative than before.

"Well, they do not reply," said my fellow-prisoner; and the tone of his voice, and the smile which accompanied it, revealed how pleased he was at my disappointment.

"This is the first benefit," I answered, "for which we have to thank the paternal Superintendent sent us from Vienna."

The day passed on gloomily. I did not speak another word, not even when M. Wergrat came to examine us himself from head to foot. When, however, evening drew on, and I heard him creeping with wolf-like step along the corridor, gliding up to our door, stealthily opening the wicket, and placing his ear to it twenty different times, evidently imagining that we were not aware of his presence, I could not help remarking to S—— how flattering it was to us to have a head-keeper who would report our most trifling words to the highest quarters.

"But do you then think he understands Italian?"

"Why, if he did not, what would be the use of his listening at the door? This certainly was wanting to complete the penitentiary code, which seems to have been invented for our special use."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The zeal and activity displayed by M. Wergrat were, it must be owned, well worthy of the confidential post which the Emperor had assigned him. On foot from five o'clock in the morning till midnight, he never ceased for an instant being at the heels of our guards, or watching us as we were at our walk, or even spying through the wicket to see what was passing in our dungeons. Our knitting and lint-making were rigidly resumed: whoever was backward in his work was sure of a reprimand, and of having his tasks doubled. In short, our persecution was increased in every way, and even S—— himself admitted that our wretchedness could not have been greater.

I had sometimes thought that it was the intention of the Emperor, in placing me with S——, to liberate me with him; but this hope faded away when I thought of the character of my companion. I was one evening absorbed as usual in gloomy musing, when I observed Caliban, always faithful, despite all the restrictive measures, adroitly making signs to me. His hesitation and irresolute manner convinced me that he dreaded the eyes of my fellow-prisoner, without however being inclined to give up the delivery of his message. Two days elapsed ere he could find a favourable moment. At last, one morning while S—— was on his knees praying, he put a little packet behind our jug as he filled it, at the same time calling my attention by a glance. When he had left the room I began to walk about, treading heavily and stopping now in one place now in another, until I was able to secure the treasure without being perceived. Once in my hands, the next thing was to open it, and this seemed impossible in a cell like ours, where we were always before each other's eyes. In vain did I wait for an opportunity; at the slightest movement that I made, to draw the mysterious roll from my pocket and remove the envelope, S—— would put down his book or leave off knitting, and I was obliged to desist. All my attempts being baffled, I had nothing left but to feign an indisposition, and thus avoid taking the usual walk on the platform. When alone, I placed myself in such a position that M. Wergrat could not surprise me, and opened the precious despatch, which I at once recognised as from Confalonieri.

With an anxiety and emotion which almost took away my breath, I read, that unexpected circumstances having enabled him to attempt an escape, he wished to express to me his affliction that he could not take me away with him, and offered to forward any communication I might wish to send home. He inclosed a small piece of a pencil and some paper, that I might write to my friends; and he concluded by stating that one thought consoled him in leaving me behind—that the Emperor certainly would ere long set me at liberty.

"May God protect and save him!" was my involuntary exclamation, and in my agitation I threw myself on my knees and prayed; then again I betook myself to reading this unhoped-for letter. So overflowing was my joy, that I forgot I had feigned indisposition in order not to take my exercise, and S—— nearly surprised me on his return rapidly pacing the cell. Happily I heard his footsteps in time to throw myself on my bed, pretending to be in a slumber. Meanwhile I passed by turns from the fullest confidence and the most lively joy, to doubt, fear, and all the anguish of the chances on which this hazardous project depended. The risk was indeed frightful, but my mind reconciled itself to it by the conviction that Confalonieri would never have recovered his liberty so long as the Emperor should live. This was a sentence of death which no longer allowed of hesitation, between a certain evil and the possibility of success in the attempt.

The next morning my first thought was to write an answer to my friend, and to accomplish this I continued to complain of my health. I was thus enabled, after S—— had departed, to trace a few lines to my sister, together with a few words to Confalonieri, thanking him for the friendship he had shown me by exposing himself in a place like Spielberg to the discovery of so perilous a project, by committing an unpardonable imprudence at such a moment rather than depart from his brother in misery without bidding him adieu, and affording the means of addressing some words of consolation to those whom he loved. I then hastened to fold up the sheets I had written and make them into a little parcel. I had but just finished this, when my companion re-entered the prison. It now only remained to forward it; and, well as Caliban watched for the opportunity, it was not until the next morning, when the jugs were filled with water, that I could deliver it to him.

Incessantly on the watch to catch the sound of the footsteps of Confalonieri, whose escape I knew must take place by the side on which the chapel stood, I lived in a state of perplexity and agitation, the more painful to support, as I was compelled to appear calm to the scrutinizing eyes of S——. The days and nights slowly dragged on, and when the hour approached which Confalonieri must have fixed upon for the attempt, I felt as if in a few instants I should hear his footsteps for the last time. My heart beat violently, and I awaited the decisive moment with as much anxiety as if it were the bearer of life or death to my friend.

One day (the recollection of it alone makes me shudder) some one approached in the corridor. My heart whispered that it was Confalonieri. He advanced and passed; and I breathed a prayer to succour and save him. The door of the platform opened. In twenty minutes, thought I, if no tumult be heard, he will have surmounted all obstacles and left the fortress. Heedless of S——, I fastened upon the wicket to catch the slightest noise, the least indication of a discovery. I counted the seconds one by one; they became minutes: the minutes—how rejoiced I was when I arrived at twenty, and when by the sound of the clock I ascertained that the fugitives had gained half an hour, and that the first chances were in their favour! my joy was full, and to this day I wonder how I was able to restrain from crying out in transport, "He is saved—let the Emperor now do his worst!"

This delight, which so excited me, I did nevertheless conceal, and I cherished it without alloy during the hours which intervened until the night visit. Then it vanished, never to be revived; for, contrary to my expectation, nothing occurred in the corridor to betray surprise or confusion on the part of M. Wergrat; and his manner was far too tranquil to allow the supposition that a prisoner was missing. The next day Confalonieri went to the platform at his usual hour, and afterwards I awaited in vain, in the news of his flight, the only joy which could enliven my heart in the dungeons of Spielberg. In vain did I weary myself with conjectures as to the causes which had prevented his purpose. Weeks and months elapsed before I became acquainted with the truth.

As soon as the agitation of this incident had subsided my days resumed their habitual course. Ever the same constraint, the same weariness, accompanied by the tormenting idea, that the man who lived at my side and breathed the same atmosphere as myself was a traitor under the mask of a saint.

"M. S——," said Wergrat one morning, "follow me: you are wanted."

My companion arose and left the cell. "May God conduct him far from me!" I exclaimed; "for if our living together continues much longer, I feel that I shall lose my belief and my senses." Then, as if relieved from an odious nightmare, I began to skip about like a delighted child; and as one quarter of an hour passed after another, I hoped more and more that he would never return. Alas! I was in this to be disappointed. Notwithstanding his accustomed habits of dissimulation, I read on his countenance, when he entered, that he had learned some important news.

"Don Stephano is here," said he as soon as the door was closed. "He is a person of great consequence now—a bishop."

"A bishop!" I repeated, starting from my seat: "*he* a bishop?"

"Yes, Bishop of Cattaro in Dalmatia," replied S—— with an ill-disguised satisfaction. "In a month the consecration will take place at Vienna, in the Cathedral of St. Stephano."

"It is a great and prompt reward to pass thus in two years from the college to the episcopal dignity. How delighted he will be to return with a mitre to his beloved Dalmatia, which he left so insignificant a person! In future he will be powerful at court; his recommendation will have great weight with the Emperor."

"Yes, he can do much," replied S——, deceived by my apparent simplicity. "He has just announced to me that two of my sons have been placed at college at Milan at his Majesty's expense."

"Really! this is a most propitious omen for you."

"My eldest is cadet in a regiment, with a promise of advancement."

"And all these unhoped-for favours are granted to you through the means of Don Stephano? Doubtless he will put the finishing stroke to his good offices by restoring you to your family."

"Alas, who knows?"

"Has he given you no hopes of approaching liberty?"

"He has not explained himself; he has only let me have a glimpse of something; but he is to set out soon for his diocese."

The door opened, and M. Wergrat appeared, saying that *his Greatness* wished to see me. This title contrasted so strangely with the baseness of the individual to whom it was applied, that I felt indignant, thinking of the infamous means by which the ignorant intriguer had raised himself thus rapidly to the highest honours of the Church. This profanation appeared so odious in my eyes, that I could not refrain from asking my guide whether it was really true.

"Without doubt," answered the little man smiling: "every one renders him the homage due to his high rank. The new Governor has paid him a visit, as well as the chief authorities of the town and the clergy. They all know that his Majesty is very fond of him: his advancement has been furiously rapid."

"Well, the same awaits you," I remarked.

He made no reply; but his face became radiant, his eyes sparkled, and his cunning smile clearly expressed that he hoped so, and that he would do all that was necessary to attain his object.

On reaching the door of the room where the Bishop was waiting, I stopped an instant as if to take breath.

"Quick, quick!" cried M. Wergrat; "the time of his Greatness is precious."

I entered, and found Don Stephano placed in a dignified manner in an arm-chair.

"His Majesty," he immediately began, stretching out his hand that I might see more plainly the pastoral ring glittering on his finger, "has deigned to raise me to a bishopric. It is a heavy burden; but with God's help I shall, I hope, acquit myself of my new duties to my gracious Sovereign's satisfaction. To him alone I owe my promotion: the Court opposed it, but he insisted—ha, ha, ha!—and they were obliged to submit. I knew this some months ago, for his Majesty (God preserve him!) had told me that he would do something for me. I thought at first that I should have a canonry; then, on reflection, I suspected that it might be something higher; and my suspicions were changed into certainty on my return from my last journey to Spielberg. His Majesty received me like a son; and after listening to me for an hour, he graciously said that he had destined a bishopric for me. I threw myself at his feet, attempting to express my gratitude; but he made me rise, saying with paternal benignity, that a Bishop only kneels to God. Well, my son, is he not a monarch for whom one would risk greater dangers than those that await me in my diocese?"

"Have you then any dangers to incur?" I could not help asking.

"Yes, dangers—perhaps even martyrdom. Cattaro is near the Turkish frontier, and the Montenegrins, who make frequent irruptions, without mentioning the Albanians, the heretics, schismatics, and other ill-weeds, must be extirpated from the Lord's vineyard at the risk of life. His Majesty knows this well: he told me that he sends me among the barbarians as an apostle, and that he reckons on my zeal to fulfil this mission. I am eager to proceed to my diocese to begin work."

"We see you then for the last time?"

"Doubtless, my son; I am going to quit you. Is not my task accomplished? have I not been the means of your return to the bosom of the Church? I can now be replaced by another, for I have laboured so that he will only have to reap. Now tell me,—you are satisfied I hope with the companion his Majesty has chosen for you? He is a saintly man, who will set you a good example. You live on good terms, do you not?"

"I make every effort to do so."

"It is a pity that you were not placed with him at first; you would have a more favourable place in his Majesty's mind. The Emperor takes great interest in you, and he gave you a proof of it by placing you with S——."

"I was told that my separation from Confalonieri had been ordered by his Majesty, but I knew not how to believe it."

"By himself, my son. Does your present companion not suit you?"

"I do not say that; but—"

"But what? would you have preferred, for instance, to be shut up with a convict? It was proposed that all of you should: it was even ordered—"

"That we should be coupled with convicts? but they are murderers, thieves—"

"Well, are you not conspirators, which is still worse in the eyes of the Sovereign? As for you, it depends on your own will whether you escape this punishment and many other misfortunes. With a little less stubbornness you might even recover your liberty,—I would answer for it."

His gracious Majesty, in his paternal solicitude for our improvement, had really decreed that the common convicts should be mingled with us; but they demanded the protection of the law, and thus were saved from an imprisonment which to them would have been equivalent to *carcere durissimo.*

"Your aged father is very ill," resumed the prelate: "he has only a few months to live, and if you were wiser you might see him again; whereas if you show yourself obstinate, he will die without giving you his blessing."

"You overwhelm me, sir," I replied: "to bear this trial, after the sufferings I have had to endure, is beyond my strength."

"Then why do you not consent?"

"I wish I could; but I can only repeat to you that I have done nothing in the imperial states forbidden by the laws; that I am a stranger, and consequently cannot consider it my duty—"

"That is to say," cried the Bishop of Cattaro, "that you refuse to listen to the voice of a father who speaks to you through me. Reflect: when I am far away it will be too late."

I bowed respectfully.

"But you are mad, my son. You might re-enter France and restore life to your father on his deathbed, and you prefer languishing in a prison, the severity of which will never be relaxed. What can prevent you from yielding to my advice? Do you believe that after dying here your name will be more respected in Italy? Have you not done enough for a country that is not your own? But I will say no more; I have only sought to do you a last service—to save you, and you will not permit me. Now let me inquire about your eyes; in what state are they?"

I had been so shaken by Don Stephano's proposal that it was some time before I could answer him.

"Well, do you not hear? your eyes?"

"They are very bad; and if I remain many months longer in prison I fear I shall lose my sight entirely."

"Another reason for adopting my counsel; but I repeat, it is your own affair."

To prevent any further return to a subject which could only serve to irritate the Bishop of Cattaro against me, I hastened to ask him where and when he would be consecrated.

"At Vienna, in the cathedral."

"It will be doubtless a grand ceremony."

"Superb, superb! my son. His Majesty overpowers me: do you know that I have already a carriage? and besides I have received in advance a considerable sum for my first expenses. So I will spare nothing: I am determined to do honour to his Majesty."

"It is a pity that your bishopric is so far from Vienna."

"True, my son, it is inconvenient; but it is in my own country, and the diocese is a prey to such disorder, that the Emperor, confiding in my zeal and firmness, has chosen me in preference to any other. His Majesty has however given me to understand that he is too well satisfied with my services not to place me soon nearer to his sacred person. I am well aware that I have enemies busy against me, especially the Minister of the Interior, Count Mitrosky, whom you knew as the Governor of Moravia; but I feel that I have a firm stay in the goodness of his Majesty, and I shall return—"

"To Spielberg?" I inquired.

"No, no,—to Vienna. My mission to you is ended: the young priest Wrba will take my place. It is on this account I urge you to profit by my last visit."

"Since you do so, sir, I beg of you as a favour to obtain for us some books."

"Books! you have already more than you want; they only make your eyes weaker. Besides reading tends to unsettle the mind. Look at me: I read no book but my breviary. Can you not while away your time by knitting or lint-making?"

"Knitting and lint-making occupy the fingers, but not the thoughts."

"Thoughts! thoughts!" cried the Bishop: "his Majesty, you well know, is adverse to thinking, and would have you employed only in one thing,—in comprehending the heinousness of your crime, and imploring pardon of God."

"Some good books—a Bible, or St. Augustine—might, I imagine—"

"You are not to have them, I tell you; that is settled. If you remain twenty years at Spielberg, you will obtain no more than those which have been generously allowed you."

"But we have only three, and I can repeat them all to you from the first word to the last."

"So much the better; you will reap the more advantage from them. As a Frenchman you have been more favoured than others. Has not his Majesty presented you with an admirable work?"

There was so much irony and asperity in this remark of the Bishop, that my patience almost failed. However I repressed my indignation and said to him, "Have you read it?"

"No, of course I have not. You well know that I have not a sufficient acquaintance with your language; but I have heard it spoken of as a masterpiece of its kind."

"Then it is a treasure unknown in my own land. Yet I have learned it by heart, and the daily prayers which it contains are so similar one to the other that I shall be happy, through your mediation, to obtain some fresh books."

"Must I tell you the same thing a hundred times over? You cannot have them: his Majesty will not permit it. Indeed I ought to have informed you that, but for my intercession, those you already possess would have been taken from you. Make up your mind upon this point: the determination of the Emperor, who desires the salvation of your soul, is inexorable."

"Salvation of my soul? but if our minds become weakened by the inaction of captivity,—if we are driven by our sufferings into idiotcy?"

"Well, has not our Saviour said, 'Blessed are those who hunger now; blessed are those who mourn'?"

I do not know which irritated me most,—the silly sardonic laugh with which this text was accompanied, or the profanation of the text itself. It cost me an effort almost superhuman to restrain myself from breaking out. With my hand resting on my knees, which I convulsively clutched, and my eyes riveted to the ground, I remained silent; and I have always considered the silence which I then preserved as the most meritorious triumph of patience I ever obtained over myself.

"As for the rest," added the prelate, "be assured that his Majesty will never lose sight of you. M. Wergrat, especially charged with the care of the state-prisoners, has been chosen by his Majesty himself. Since I am to leave you, our gracious Sovereign deemed it a point of the first consequence to have a person in whom he could confide for exact and continual information concerning you all. This ought to satisfy you that he will always have an eye upon his prisoners."

All this meant that the Bishop of Cattaro, being no longer able to retain the noble office of spy, which had been worth a mitre to him, was replaced by an agent of police, whose fortune was made, provided he gave his imperial master the same proofs of zeal as his predecessor Don Stephano Paolowitz. And who was this man, who united all the qualifications required by the

Emperor,—who received his instructions from the head of a mighty empire and corresponded directly with him? As I learned soon after, he was the assistant *hangman* of the city of Vienna—the functionary who accompanied the criminals sentenced to death to the scaffold, and took care that the execution was conducted as prescribed by law!

Such was the person whom the Emperor picked out from his thirty-two millions of subjects to superintend the prisoners of state, and to draw up daily a confidential report of all that was done or said at Spielberg, and address it, sealed, to his Majesty's own hand. He well merited the distinction conferred upon him; and I was enabled to render the Bishop a good account of his zeal and activity, when asked how M. Wergrat acquitted himself of his duty.

"That is the way our Sovereign should be served," remarked Don Stephano: "his Majesty, with a guardian like this, may set his mind at rest: no abuses can take place in Spielberg."

After having dilated for a few minutes on the honours and profits attached to his bishopric, Don Paolowitz took me by the hand and wished me farewell, saying, "We shall meet again; may you then be in a better frame of mind, for the time approaches *when you will ask for the Son of Man, and he is here no more.*"

"I hope at least," I answered, making an inclination of the head to conceal a smile which in spite of myself curled on my lips,—"I hope you will remember me when you are with the Emperor."

At these words the Bishop knitted his dark brows and cried, "Are you going to talk again about the books? I should have a fine welcome, indeed, were I to make such a request to his Majesty! You have had too many books already, and if you had never learned anything but your catechism you would not be here. Throughout my diocese I will take care that, whether in the schools or elsewhere, there shall be no more reading allowed than just sufficient to teach our religion and our duties towards our august Sovereign. I know his paternal intentions on this subject too well not to consider the pretended diffusion of knowledge, and the deplorable development of thought, as the ruin of society and the damnation of Christians. It is in thought that the evil lies. Thought produced the pride and rebellion of the fallen angels and of our first parents: and it is an act of homage to the Almighty to repress the daring tendency and dangerous efforts of the human mind. This is the end which his Majesty has proposed to himself for the good of his subjects throughout the extent of his vast empire: this is the reason why he has set bounds to the instruction afforded at universities, colleges, and schools; why he would not have us know more than our fathers did; and why he wishes to purge your mind of all philosophical and revolutionary ideas, by the privation of all reading which might nourish its analytical and pernicious tendencies. Judge now, after knowing this, whether your request will be well received; you are ruining yourself, heedless young man."

"But it is not to books I allude; I only meant to beg that you would not forget to entreat his Majesty to have me removed into a cell less gloomy than the one I now occupy, that my eyes, which are daily growing worse and worse, may be preserved. I have applied to the Governor, and he answered that the change did not rest with him, but with his Majesty."

"That is true: nothing is done without his particular order; and so it should be."

"Then may I beg you to use your influence with the Emperor?"

"Most certainly; be assured I will speak to his Majesty about it: I have no doubt it will be managed."

I again bowed to him, and returned to my cell under the escort of the gentleman honoured with the confidence of the Emperor,—the important personage destined, like other zealous servants, to raise himself upon the ruins of the unfortunate.

CHAPTER XIX.

I WOULD have given anything for the happiness of pouring forth the stormy feelings which filled my soul into the bosom of a faithful friend; but I was under the necessity of weighing every word, and appearing calm in the eyes of my companion, who unceasingly repeated, "A Bishop in so short a time! what influence he must have over the mind of the Emperor!"

"There is no doubt," said I, "that he has great power, and that on him depends our liberation."

"Do you think so? has he told you so himself?"

"No; but he gave me to understand as much. Is he not called upon to celebrate his happy accession to office by some act of benevolence? I suppose he has given you some hopes, for you have been a prisoner now nine years, and your conduct has always been such as to deserve the clemency of the Sovereign. Every probability is in your favour: you will be set free, depend upon it."

At these words the countenance of my fellow-sufferer brightened, for none have so many misgivings about their fate as those who have abandoned good faith and honour, and descended to a compromise with shame and treachery.

"You console me," he said, taking my hand, and attempting to put it to his lips: "my poor children, my beloved wife, shall I see them again?" He then threw himself upon his knees, supplicating the Divine mercy to soften the heart of the Emperor. As I beheld him kneeling, I felt exasperated at being condemned always to have before my eyes this degraded being, whose baseness could neither extinguish his faith nor his sensibility, and who by turns excited my pity and aversion. My thoughts reverted forcibly to the instrument of his fall, and the elevation of that priest to the prelacy seemed to me as infamous and sacrilegious as that of Cardinal Dubois. Disgusted at such execrable abuse, I repeated in the words of the Prophet, "The abomination of abominations is entered into the temple of the Lord; desolation is in his sanctuary."

In fact, the conduct of Don Stephano in this last visit was odious in the extreme. Never before had he shown himself so intolerant, so coldly egotistical; never had he so displayed his miserable ignorance, and his unbending pride, as now that he was honoured with the pastoral ring, the sign of love and humility. He cared nothing for the sufferings and future prospects of the prisoners, to whom his pretended ministry of peace and consolation had only been a source of despair. By their means he was become the favourite of an Emperor; and like the rich sinner he was fattened by their afflictions, drunken with their tears. When he enlarged on the honours which would be paid him in his diocese, on the palace he should inhabit, and the good cheer he intended to make there, he recollected not that he was addressing men, most of whom had lived formerly in abundance, and who were now reduced by an inexorable will to regret in their dungeons not only the crumbs which fell from their own table but from that of their servants. They were hungry and clothed in tatters, their cheeks were emaciated; but what mattered all this to him who was plump and flourishing? Nor did he in his last moments address to them one word of encouragement, one of those charitable exhortations which refresh the heart of the unhappy like a salutary dew. No, he left them for ever in their prison, knowing well that many among them were doomed to perish there through his denunciations and calumnies; yet he did not for an instant show a spark of pity amid the joy which swelled his heart at the thought of the mitre which he had acquired in so short a time, and that with less trouble than Judas took to gain his thirty pieces of silver.

After witnessing this clerical desertion of every good principle and feeling, my mind, abandoned to itself, went astray amidst its sorrows, and recognised as a heavenly inspiration the thought that such pollutions could only exist through the abuses of Catholicism, and that we ought to reject as contrary to reason, justice, and truth, a worship which substituted, in the work of reconciliation, the authority of men for that of the Deity. Accordingly, I resolved for the future to shun all communication with the priest who was to succeed the Bishop of Cattaro. This determination for a time appeased the storms which the arrogance of Don Stephano and the hypocrisy of S—— unceasingly raised in my bosom. I was relieved from the irritation of anger by the conviction that men and actions like these were too much beneath my elevated reason and enlightened religion for me to regard them with aught but compassion. So true it is that tolerance is instilled into us much more easily by a feeling of our own superiority, than by that of our duty towards God and our neighbours. But this tolerance, springing from our self-love and not from charity, is ephemeral, and soon yields to new subjects of discontent.

I now proceeded, as well as my recollection permitted, to an investigation of the holy books and the institutions of the Church, indulging in the absurd presumption that it was profound and impartial, because it satisfied my vanity—easily deluded as to the scantiness of my erudition and the lightness of my judgement. Disregarding the words of our Saviour to St. Peter,—"Upon this rock will I build my church,"—I not only denied the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope as his successor and head of the Church, but also the infallibility and authority of the Councils, from which logically resulted, in my eyes, the rejection of the Catholic Church, of her commandments, liturgy, and discipline.

The arguments and proofs which I drew from the books I had read, and from my own reason, were doubtless miserable enough; but they served me, as they had served the Reformers of the sixteenth century, to sap, even to its foundations, that Church which eighteen hundred years of controversy and furious attacks have never shaken; they sufficed to confirm me in that erroneous maxim, that one ought to have recourse to free inquiry in the judgement of religious questions,—and that in matters of faith all ought to be submitted to the tribunal of conscience and individual reason, which have the right of accepting as truths those only that are founded on the Scriptures. From this spirit of Protestantism to a much greater independence of thought there is but one step; and that step, alas, was soon taken.

Considering auricular confession as a human institution, and the principal cause of the abuses with which the Catholic clergy are reproached, I substituted for it in my mind self-confession—a simple cry of repentance breathed by the sinner, and heard by God alone, as the promise of an amended life. All intervention between the man who mourns his sins and the merciful Deity who judges him, appeared to me presumptuous and unworthy the majesty of God. The power of binding and loosing upon earth, which Jesus gave so solemnly to his Apostles and their successors, appeared to me only a figurative expression, not implying the sacrament of confession as the Catholics have instituted it, any more than those other words of our Saviour, "Eat and drink, for this is my body," ordained the sacrament of the Eucharist in the sense the Church teaches it. Applying myself only, as the Protestants do, to the words which follow, "Do this in memory of me," I only considered the approach to the Lord's table as an act of commemoration, and repudiated the real presence, and consequently the sacrifice of the mass.

Persuaded that I had logically submitted the most intricate questions to the searching light of analysis, step by step I rejected from my belief, as being opposed to reason and justice, the eternal duration of punishments, the indissolubility of marriage, the impossibility of salvation by any other religion than Catholicism, &c.; and I proceeded so far as to limit the acts of devotion to prayer and good works, and to discover no more in the New Testament than a system of pure and sublime morality revealed by a God. Here I paused, and, satisfied with divesting the holy work of all superstition and all the puerile mummeries with which men had overlaid it, I believed, in my silly presumption, that scepticism could no longer affect me; and that I had raised in my heart, by the light of reason, an indestructible temple to wisdom and virtue.

Sad was my error! My knowledge and faith were not sufficiently deep-rooted to resist the growing sophisms of my arrogant intellect, and peace soon ceased to exist in my bosom. Carrying out to the utmost extent that freedom of inquiry, whereby I constituted myself absolute judge of all I should believe or deny, I took up the insoluble question of the mysteries, of which one alone—Predestination—presented any difficulty to my mind. The others—such as the Trinity, the immaculate conception, the incarnation, the death, and resurrection of a God—were simply above my reason; while predestination and original sin appeared to me not only contrary to it, but to all principles of justice. This was the gordian knot, the problem which no argument, no process of thought, could solve; and after having plunged again and again into its unfathomable abyss, I could only arrive at the conclusion, that a God, supremely good, supremely powerful, supremely prescient, had created of his own accord angels and men, of whom, at the very moment of that creation, he foresaw the fall and eternal damnation; and that, as an article of faith,—indeed, as the basis of our whole religion,—we were called upon to admit this odious act of His divine power, which my conscience, my better feelings, and my intellect equally recoiled from, as unjust, cruel, and incompatible with the attributes of Him who can neither will evil, nor be compelled to do it; and with this my mind became confused.

If we possessed the power of creation in conjunction with the gift of prescience, and, by an act of our will, we proposed to ourselves to create beings foredoomed to suffer throughout the duration of their existence, would there not be just grounds to accuse us of inhumanity and barbarity, and to consider us in the same light with those cruel and unfeeling men who transmit to their children, knowingly, a chronic disease which will afflict them during their whole life? And what censure should we not deserve, if, persisting in our creative fancy, we added to the torments of the unfortunate who never desired to be born, an eternity of tortures to them and their descendants! Should we not deserve to be taxed with cruel injustice, and to be detested by those whom we had ourselves exposed to temptation and the certainty of their fall?

Thus did I reason in the aberration of my spirit, wandering in an inextricable labyrinth, unprovided with any guiding clue to lead me out, until, at last, judging of the justice of God by that of men, I arrived at the conclusion, natural to weak humanity, but destructive to all Christian belief, that original sin was incompatible with the attributes of the Deity. I strove, it is true, to recur to the truths of the sacred writings as soon as I discovered the irresistible rapid into which I had launched myself; but the proofs my reason found therein were no longer sufficiently convincing to conquer my repugnance, and force me to bow my head to that which appeared to me absurd, and contrary to all justice, charity, and mercy.

My faith being thus shaken to its very foundation, it was not long ere, carrying out the same principle of liberty of discussion, I arrogated to myself the right of testing whether the Scriptures,—which commenced, in my opinion, with a blasphemy against the highest attribute of God, his goodness,—were really throughout a divine revelation, or merely an inspiration, exaggerated and disfigured according to the interest, caprice, or ignorance of mankind. I was at first appalled by the consequences resulting from such an inquiry; but, by degrees, I habituated myself to attacking separately each of the parts of that sacred work, wherein all is linked together, forming one immense chain of miraculous facts and undeniable proofs, from which nothing can be withdrawn without running the risk of losing the path of truth, and falling for ever into the darkness of doubt and incredulity.

In this manner I pulled to pieces the blessed Testament page after page; and when I arrived at the crowning point of the holy structure raised by the mercy of God for the salvation of sinners, the divinity of Jesus Christ, I did not hesitate to follow Voltaire and Gibbon, in laying the axe to the root of that religion, whose origin, foundation, and miraculous propagation no longer presented anything which could not be explained by mere human means. The divine Redeemer was then not one of the Godhead, but a man,—most perfect and most virtuous doubtless,—still nothing more than a man, and only superior to his fellow-creatures in wisdom and genius.

Such was the process of reasoning, or rather sophistry, which led me on to Deism, and of which I have here given a brief account, merely to show into what errors man, however desirous of truth and attached to religion, will fall when he throws off the salutary restraint of infallible authority, and relies in matters of faith on the inspirations of his conscience, and the light of reason alone.

This return to Deism, which satisfied my mind but did not as formerly soothe my heart, resulted, I repeat, from the horror with which the unchristian-like conduct of Don Stephano, together with his elevation to the mitre, had struck me. But for this, and the annoying spectacle of my fellow-sufferer, with prayer on his lips and treachery in his heart, I should not have thus again renounced the belief which the recollections of childhood had revived in me; nor should I have fallen from doubt into doubt, from one incredulity into another, till at last the most dreadful of all.... But I shall soon unbosom all the miseries of my soul, and will now limit myself to the remark, that the ways of the Lord, although hidden, are not the less wonderful and sure; and that the greatest and most unexpected boons are often, by His will, sent us through the means of the most overwhelming misfortunes.

Don Marco, whom I continued to call to the window, dared no longer answer me, for fear of being surprised by the indefatigable Wergrat; or if he did reply, it was only in monosyllables, which my ear could scarcely catch. I thought I should have been much happier near Pellico and Maroncelli, whom nothing could stay whenever they had an opportunity of benefiting their friends; but neither of them could drag himself up to the window, Silvio being too weak, and poor Piero having broken his leg by a fall on the frozen snow which covered the platform. I was therefore completely thrown upon my own isolated resources, already far too exhausted to support an existence which I felt could not fail to end in madness or idiotcy, if it lasted but a few months longer.

There was nothing to assure me that I should be delivered from a companionship whose duration depended entirely on the arbitrary will of the Emperor. It appeared, on the contrary, more likely that, after having despoiled us of every consolation, our imperial jailer would now abandon us to our fate, being well satisfied that the assistant executioner whom he had appointed his agent would enforce, with every possible rigour, the cruel regulations to which he had subjected us. To chase away these dark forebodings, this fixed idea of an indissoluble union with S——, I strove to reflect and discourse upon the past, just as a patient, stretched on his bed of sickness, talks without ceasing, in order to dispel the thought of death which continually haunts him. "No, no," said I to myself one evening, when, fatigued with the painful sufferings of a long day, I sought repose and sleep in vain; "this is not to be borne, it is beyond my strength. I must petition the new Governor, and perhaps I may induce him to write to the Emperor. Tomorrow I will speak about it to M. Wergrat, and S—— may think what he likes."

Satisfied and consoled by this resolve, I arranged my pallet, and again attempted to sleep; but I was suddenly disturbed by the approach of several persons in the corridor. I listened. A moment after they stopped at the door of our cell, and Wergrat entered, saying to my companion, "Make haste and dress yourself: you are wanted."

"Wanted! where?" asked S—— anxiously.

"You will soon know," answered Wergrat mysteriously.

"They are going to let you free," I whispered to my fellow-prisoner.

"Good God, can it be true!" he replied; and in the excess of his agitation he was unable to find his clothes.

"Don Stephano has not deceived you," I continued in a low voice.

"Come, come, don't be all night!" cried the distrustful Wergrat, drawing nearer to us in order to prevent our uttering a word without his hearing it. But the precaution was unnecessary, for S——, having recovered from his first surprise, withdrew from me at the same time. His pale features, lighted up by the lantern of one of the guards, bore no expression but an impassive coldness, which often made me boil with impatience.

As he was about to depart I said to him, "May you be happy in the bosom of your family!"

"Alas," he replied, "I am in the dark as to the fate in store for me; but the Lord is merciful!"

Then, without the slightest emotion, or the least of regret, he touched my cheek with his own, and bade me adieu. I felt that no respect or pity was due to a man who could, at the announcement of his liberty, remain thus unthawed, and without yielding to the impulse of expressing, by a word or a tear, that he felt some compassion for the companion he left in irons.

The feelings which I underwent when he had crossed the threshold of the door, and the bolts were again drawn upon me, were poignant. It seemed, in the bitterness of my resentment, that none but the wicked were favoured here below,—that the good alone were condemned to groan, because they would not traffic with their consciences. There was among us but one wretch unworthy to suffer in so noble a cause, and he had been liberated: he alone was allowed to return to Italy, which we had worked to enfranchise. But the God that I was about to deny had pity upon me. The cell of Don Marco was opened; he came forth, and walked along the corridor. I heard him ask for his breviary. Poor dear Don Marco! he never forgot his pious duties. I was certain he would pray for us. I blessed him for having by his last words stilled the tempest of my soul, which had incited me to blaspheme the Almighty.

CHAPTER XX.

All was now silent in the corridor; and the door of the staircase, which had been opened for the passage of those liberated, had been some time closed; yet I still remained listening whether the Director of Police would return for any one else. But he came not: S——, Don Marco, and his companion were the only prisoners released. Two conflicting feelings divided my heart—regret at not having been myself included in the number of those liberated, and joy at finding myself alone in my prison after the long constraint I had endured; at being again able to breathe in quiet, and to walk about without hearing my companion complain that I disturbed him in his prayers.

"He is gone!" I exclaimed, clapping my hands and dancing about my gloomy cell; "I can now whistle, talk, and amuse myself as I please,—open the window and converse with my neighbours whenever I like." I sprang up to the loophole, and, although it was night, called Maroncelli and Pellico, to say to them, as Moretti did when S—— quitted him, "I am no longer under constraint, my friends; rejoice with me, my persecution is at an end."

The "Silence!" repeated by the different sentinels prevented their replying, and I was compelled therefore to repress the outburst of my joy. Tired at last of pacing backwards and forwards in my prison, of which I now felt myself in full possession, I lay down on my bed, most happy that I had no longer a head within two feet of mine ever watching me.

The next morning I experienced an unspeakable content in no longer perceiving near me that object of suspicion and disgust; but the comparison of his fate with mine damped with sorrow my first feeling of pleasure. The idea of the freedom he now enjoyed presented a picture which contrasted most painfully with the dark walls of my dungeon, and the privations of my captivity. My imagination painted, in the most vivid and delightful colours, the joy which awaited this man on his return to Italy: it depicted him waking the next morning under the roof of his fathers, opening his eyes on windows without bars, and hearing sounds, not of chains, but of the dear voices of his family. Then, by degrees, I fancied myself in the same circumstances; and after passing many hours in day-dreams of my own sunny France, and those I loved there, the step of the sentry or the clank of irons recalled me to the horrible reality of my situation. This sudden revulsion overwhelmed me with anguish. Vainly did I strive to banish these recollections, which only left my soul a prey to despair. In spite of my resolution I could not conquer the irresistible tendency to revert to all I had lost. My whole being was shattered, and I felt unequal to struggle against so many afflictions.

Then I would have sought to draw consolation from religion, and pray to the Almighty to have pity on me; but my heart remained hardened and incapable of resignation. How could my weak faith make head against the assaults of discouragement and despair? The Deism that I professed was not sufficiently proved and fixed in my soul to resist the doubts by which I was constantly assailed; and my aspirations to the Supreme Being were no longer succeeded by that hope in His divine mercy which I had experienced when as yet unpolluted by the attacks of scepticism.

Finding no consolation in my appeals to Heaven, I attempted at least to steel my courage with the thought that I suffered in a noble cause. But here also I was deceived in my expectation, for faith in worldly matters also began to abandon me. The sacrifices which I was but recently so proud of having imposed on myself, to sustain the dignity of my character, now appeared to me mere extravagance, unjustifiable in the eye of reason; and when I asked myself what object such self-denial could answer, I could only reply mournfully, "None, none!" Deserted all at once by every support,—confidence in God, and reliance on my own energies,—I sank into the lowest despondency; and as the heart is so framed that it follows the dark moods of adversity, even more than the illusions of fortune, to their utmost extreme, I became a living proof of the truth of that terrible text of Scripture, "Deep calleth unto deep," in losing the last anchor of hope which was left me in the great wreck,—belief in the immortality of the soul and the rewards of a future state.

With a frantic avidity I accumulated argument upon argument, to persuade myself that the soul is not immaterial, and that all ends with life. Vainly had I recourse to the sense of right and wrong which God has instilled into our hearts, to guide us in our conduct to our neighbours, and to convince us that there is another place beyond this earth, where every infraction of the moral and universal order is punished and repaired. The systems of Spinosa, Hobbes, and Helvetius were present in my memory, and gave for answer that morality and human justice are only conventional; that what is virtue in one latitude, country, or time, is crime in another, without shocking that innate sense which we call conscience by these strange notions of good and evil; that this conscience is the result of fear alone; and that man would abandon himself without compunction to the most shameful excesses, if he could commit them with impunity.

Vainly also did I, in refutation of the materialists, adduce the impossibility of conceiving matter intelligent and thinking. The school of Aristotle, Locke, Condillac, Tracy, backed by that of Cabanis, etc., supplied me with ideologic and physiologic reasonings, to establish analytically and logically that there can be no intelligence without previous sense; that our ideas are only sensations, and that the thinking faculty resides in the brain, a pressure upon which, a blow, or the slightest hurt, suffices to derange its organic economy, and reduce this immaterial and immortal soul of which we are so boastful to incapacity or nothingness. What availed me to repeat that Heaven and earth proclaimed the existence of a God, and that one cannot, without falling into absurdity and madness, deny that the innumerable worlds floating so magnificently before our eyes were created by an Almighty Being who always has been and ever will be? This did not prove that my intellect, which raised itself by the contemplation of his works to the knowledge of the Supreme Maker, was destined by him to survive the dissolution of the body. Nothing was there to warrant that our souls should not share the fate of those of animals, of which we were compelled to admit the existence, though affirming that they cease with life. When, affrighted and dismayed by this similarity, I recoiled from the consequences, alleging our superiority over all the other creatures that inhabit this globe,—a superiority consisting not only in a higher degree of perfection in the scale of intelligences, but a complete difference in the organization and the nature of thought,—my evil spirit soon answered, that this did not prove the thinking powers which render us the lords of the creation to perish with the body, and that our belief in a future life was nothing but a deception of imagination, arising from our horror of entire annihilation. In fact, what could presentiments and inductions avail against the sensible and palpable proofs adduced by the materialists? We cannot find in ourselves any arguments or intuitions sufficiently convincing to defend the truths of natural religion; especially when, after cancelling our early impressions, we have wandered from doubt to doubt, from incredulity to incredulity, becoming conversant with the sophistry of the ancient and modern philosophers, who have striven to heap blasphemy upon blasphemy, in order to divest our soul of its immortality.

Into what an abyss of misery did I then fall! Never was there a wretch more tortured than I was, when I thus remained with nothing left to compensate me for the loss of Heaven but a dungeon and fetters. My condition became still more deplorable when, following Tracy and Bentham, I tried to persuade myself that the principle of utility is the only one upon which the morality of individuals and societies can be wisely founded, and that a correct development of this principle is sufficient to convince man that his happiness lies in the fulfilment of his duties, which consist in always being just and kind toward his fellow-creatures. This system, which has been so extolled in our days, soon melted away under the breath of egotism, leaving as a result of my analysis the horrid conclusion that everything in this world should be subjected to calculation, and that profit and loss should be the only tests of the goodness or badness of human actions. After this it was but natural that I should deem as an act of delusion or folly every sacrifice to virtue with which one might dispense without injuring one's reputation; nor could I apply such a standard of morality to my own conduct, without lamenting that I had preferred first death, then perpetual imprisonment, to the sweet enjoyments of life, in order to obey the absurd prejudices of conscience and honour. What would have become of me, if God, for my misfortune, had permitted me to re-enter the world with these principles? I could not have failed to prove by my deeds how prone we must be to trample upon our most sacred duties, when we think that the body is all, the soul nothing, and utility our only rule of action.

Could any one have seen me in these frightful moments, passing from a senseless fury to the stupor of unbounded desolation, now throwing about my arms with exclamations of despair, and now casting myself on my bed to stifle the sobs which escaped me at the remembrance of the earthly blessings I had lost,—could any one then have perceived my heart, withered and scorched by the fire of unbelief,—he would have recoiled from me, as from a dreadful object of Divine wrath, thinking that hell alone could exhibit tortures more dreadful than those suffered by the materialist in the pangs of a misfortune which is only to cease with life, and to be endured in the uninterrupted monotony of a dungeon.

I am unable to say how long these mortal paroxysms lasted, when one day being on the platform, to which the mild and refreshing rays of a spring sun had attracted me for the first time during several weeks, I was roused from my affliction by the sound of irons and the appearance of a convict, who dragged himself along the bastion below. His arms, legs, and every part of his body were loaded with enormous chains, which made him stagger and stop every instant to take breath and gasp, as if life had been about to leave him. Touched by the spectacle of so much suffering, and indignant at the cruelty of the keepers, who, seeing him about to fall, struck him with the but-ends of their muskets, I leaned over the parapet, the better to distinguish the haggard countenance of the poor wretch, on whose features were still some traces of beauty, though disfigured by the long red dishevelled locks which escaped from a bloody handkerchief tied round his head.

"Who is that man?" I asked of the soldier who accompanied me. "What has he done, that he is thus loaded with fetters and treated so badly?"

"He is the greatest villain of all the prisoners in the *carcere durissimo.*"

At these words, spoken loud enough to be heard on the bastion, the convict stopped, raised his head, and fixed his ferocious and piercing looks upon us.

"The manacles which you see on his hands," added my guard, "were put on because he attempted to assassinate the Commandant with a knife."

"Yes," cried the convict, raising his two hands with difficulty towards my informer; "yes, for that you have chained me like a wild beast, for that you have done your best to kill me. But I repent it not: I would with joy support all tortures, and those of hell likewise, if there be one, to revenge myself on your rascal of a Commandant, and on all of you, wretches that you are!"

"Silence! you impious dog, silence!" said one of the soldiers who were with the convict, in a voice of thunder, while the other gave him a blow with his musket that felled him to the ground.

"Come, up with you, you beast!" they both cried, kicking him roughly; but he did not stir, lying as if he were dead.

"Oh, that is it!" they exclaimed, after vainly attempting to make him stir by kicking and beating him with the musket. "Mind, you villain! the corporal is coming; we will call him to give you the lash."

At the word "lash" the felon lifted his head, and trying to turn towards the soldiers answered, "You see very well I can't get up by myself."

"Do you think we are going to help you, gallows-bird? Do you expect that we will soil our hands by touching a wretch who denies God? You'll soon find out the weight of the corporal's arm."

At this menace the convict made great efforts to get upon his knees. "Ha, ha!" cried one of the soldiers; "the wolf is beginning to stir. Did I not tell you, rascal, we would soon bring you to life again?"

Upon this the countenance of the felon, which had before become much more livid, assumed such an expression of ferocity, that the soldiers, despite his weakness and his chains, were alarmed. On their attempting to force him to move on, he got into a sitting posture, and remained deaf and insensible to their menaces.

"They might kill him," said my guard to me, "ere he would move a step."

The obstinacy of the prisoner was in truth more than a match for his keepers. There he sat motionless; and, but for the convulsive shiver which at intervals betrayed the fury which raged within him, one might have believed him dead.

"You suppose perhaps," resumed the guard, "that he will give in at last and move on; not a bit of it. Leave him, and you will find him there two hours hence, as obstinate as ever, warming himself in the blessed sun of heaven just as if he deserved it; for you must know," he continued with a gesture of horror, "that this abominable wretch neither believes in Jesus Christ, nor hell, nor the devil. Robbery and murder, and all that sort of thing, one can understand, especially in a place like this; but to deny one's religion, and say we are like so many dogs, without souls and without God, is enough to make one's hair stand on end; and that is what renders this man the execration of everybody, convicts as well as keepers."

"Convicts!" I repeated with surprise.

"Yes, yes; there is not one of them but would spit in his face if he could, because they know there can be no confidence in a blasphemer and an atheist."

At this remark my heart was troubled, the blood fled from my face, and with difficulty I asked whether he had committed many crimes.

"Crimes! he has more murders on his conscience than there are days in the month."

"And how is it he has not been condemned to death and executed?"

"Because he would never confess, though they have nearly killed him with beating. When he first came to Spielberg he pretended penitence, in the hope of escaping the *carcere durissimo*; but directly he found that this was of no avail, he would have nothing more to do with the priest, and betook himself to telling every one who would listen to him that he neither believed in our Saviour nor in a future state. Then he played the madman, howling in his cell like a beast, biting his irons, and blaspheming so horribly that they were obliged to put a gag on him. I know not what the villain has not done to deceive his keepers, up to the day when he tried to murder the Commandant, in return for the goodness he had shown him. Since then no one has felt any pity for him; his companions even would tear him limb from limb, if they could get him into their clutches. But hush!—look! there are several now going to pass him,—you will hear them."

As he spoke, a torrent of invectives burst from the knot of convicts, who had stopped before him. "Renegade! atheist! child of Satan!" they cried, some menacing, some making signs at him; but he gave no symptom of life. At last, when their vociferations became too bitter to be borne, he raised his head, and fixing his eyes upon them with a look which made the boldest start back, he roared, "Beasts! there are no devils but the jailers who torment you, and no God but him who like me would liberate you!"

Then the soldiers struck him, and the convicts, compelled to move on, reiterated with gestures of horror, "Renegade! atheist!"

"Atheist!" I muttered to myself, covering my face with my hands, as if I had feared that they could read the stigma on my brow: and in my heart, penetrated with shame and terror, a voice whispered that I also deserved the name, that like this abhorred felon I should become an object of execration even to those degraded men, whose voices I still heard, if they knew that I had lost all belief in a future existence, and that I was as irreligious, as unbelieving, as much an infidel as this infamous being. The truth of this hideous resemblance appeared in so clear and dreadful a light that I was overwhelmed; and when I was informed by the guard that it was time to re-enter the prison, my eyes fell upon the wretch, whose livid countenance, lighted up by the sun, had something in it so satanic, that I cast my eyes to Heaven and cried, "No! Thou who makest that beneficent luminary to shine down upon us, didst not create man that the just, who endures suffering in this world, and this being, steeped as he is in crime, should have the same end. It is only the senseless or perverse who can say in his heart that there is no life beyond the tomb."

Hardly had I returned to my cell, when the tears which dimmed my eyes gushed forth in abundance; the veil which had so long overcast my thoughts was torn away. I was ashamed of my madness, and for the first time for many days I threw myself on my knees to implore God to have pity on me, to supplicate him to preserve me in future from the horrible torments of unbelief. My prayer was without doubt heard, for on the morrow I received through Caliban a few lines from my beloved Confalonieri, containing the highest eulogy of the young priest who had succeeded Don Stephano. From this day my resolution was formed, and to hasten the period when I might be enabled to see him, I requested that he would grant me a few moments conversation.

CHAPTER XXI.

Our new spiritual director having sent for me, I was soon conducted into his presence. On my entering the room he rose, and taking me by the hand, bade me welcome in Italian. His voice was gentle, and the expression of his features so benevolent that at first sight I felt myself attracted towards him. He was no longer the timid student, scarcely daring to lift his eyes or speak, as I had seen him in the presence of the Bishop of Cattaro; but a young priest, of pious and dignified deportment, and bearing in his amiable countenance the impress of candour, piety, and goodness.

"Pray take a seat," he said with kind thoughtfulness, on observing that I remained standing before him: "your fetters are heavy; you must be much weakened, and, like an invalid, you must always be in need of rest. You are alone, my poor young friend; such a solitude must be a cruel infliction, when one has nothing to fill up the void of the long day."

"Such isolation," I observed, "is, however, better than an ill-assorted union."

He smiled sadly, and replied, "Perhaps they will put you again with Confalonieri one of these days."

"That is my most ardent desire," I answered; "but I cannot hope for it: we are not accustomed to have our wishes accomplished here, and our lot is to suffer."

"I can see that but too well, my dear sir, and I was far from imagining that your existence here was so dreadful as it is; but this time of trial will pass away, and the afflictions which we endure here below will be recompensed to us in an after life. Take patience then, and be assured that God never abandons those who put their trust in Him."

"Unfortunately our confidence fails us when the evil is prolonged, and when all that happens or surrounds us leads to question the Divine mercy. We have now lived so very long under bolts and bars!"

"Oh, yes, yes!" he said with impressive kindness; "doubtless your fate is very dreadful, a hundred times more so than that of ordinary convicts: who would deny it? Certainly not I, who observe the baleful effects of it on every one of you; but this mistrust and discouragement, to which you so naturally give way, ought never to weaken your faith in God, and in his infinite goodness. Offer your sufferings to Him as a sacrifice, and He will accept them for the love of our Redeemer."

I remained silent, and he continued: "Do you not feel that there is no tribulation which we cannot support with patience, with joy even, when we cherish in our hearts the consoling conviction that it is borne for Jesus Christ, and that he will not forget it at the last day? Think not that I do not feel for you with all my soul. I feel all that you have lost, all that you regret,

—your family, your country, your youth withering away, your strength gradually wasting, your mind for want of study falling into decay, and your heart lamenting the loss of all its affections. Yes, I feel for all the sufferings which such a destiny must entail upon a man of your age; and my tears flow with yours, poor captives. Believe then that in what I say I have no other motive but to encourage you to seek a refuge against such hardships in your religious convictions; for piety will save you in this world, and ensure your salvation in the next."

There was so much unction and simple-mindedness in these words, that I had not the least doubt I should find a consoler and a friend in the sensible and good man who understood his charitable mission so well. If I did not at once pour all my heart into his bosom in this first interview, and withheld the avowal of my recent desperation, it was only from the shame of confessing, in the presence of so much holiness, that I had even renounced all belief, and that I still drifted in the shallows of doubt and incredulity. But he divined, by the few words which escaped me, the uneasiness and anguish of a conscience warring with the sophisms of pride. He therefore again sent for me a few days after, when, touched by his apostolical goodness, I unreservedly disclosed to him my sufferings and my errors. After having related the history of my return to Catholicism, I stated what causes had given me a leaning towards Protestantism, my doubts and hesitations up to the moment when I decided upon adopting the reformed religion. I narrated to him how, by applying the principle of free inquiry to matters of faith, I had proceeded not only to dismiss from my belief the articles rejected by the Protestants, but one by one all the other dogmas of Revelation, not excepting even the divinity of Christ.

"Yes, sir," I said, taking him by the hand, which he did not withdraw, in spite of the surprise and grief depicted in his features, "to this, I am obliged to admit, did my investigation lead me. Taking reason alone for guide, I arrived at the conviction that Christianity was, like all other creeds, the invention of man; and that there is but one true religion, Deism.

"Poor young man!" exclaimed the pious ecclesiastic at intervals, while he listened to me with such indulgent compassion that my contrite heart was penetrated with gratitude; "into what errors have you fallen! How much you must have suffered ere you were brought to the denial of the religion of your fathers,—you who had so much need of a firm belief to sustain the calamities with which God has visited you! For Deism is very vague and arid, when the soul has lost its last energies, and looks up to Heaven for solace and hope. Have you not found it so?" he asked in a soft and persuasive tone: "have you not, in your days of distress, vainly had recourse to what you termed your pious inspirations? Did you not feel more cast down, more mistrustful of Providence, after each of these ephemeral invocations?"

"Alas, yes!" I replied; "and soon despairing to find resignation and courage from these sterile prayers, in which I now began to lose all faith, I fell into a state of the most fearful scepticism. Nor is this all," I added with deep emotion, and not without some hesitation; "I soon arrived at the last degree of mental aberration, I became a materialist."

The excellent man added immediately, "It was the necessary consequence of the system that you had adopted: between catholicism and materialism there is no middle course wherein the human mind can rest. Your great Fénelon said this, as also that materialism is the desperation of reason and of intellect. But I am sure," he continued, "that your heart was not slow to rebel against the monstrous error of the mortality of the soul, and that you have found in your conscience arguments sufficiently strong to convince you of the fallibility of reason in matters of faith. Tell me, did you not feel very miserable when you found all your futurity reduced to the few wretched days of our evanescent existence?"

"So miserable," I answered, "that I should certainly have put an end to my life, if this state of incredulity had been prolonged but a few weeks. How indeed should I have been able to resist the dreadful temptation to deliver myself in a few seconds from the torments of captivity?"

"My poor young friend! your sufferings are truly very great, your situation most cruel, and of a nature to destroy all hope. But precisely because you are deprived of all the consolations of this world, you must seek for those which come from on high. You will find relief in a sincere and unalterable faith. A belief in God and the immortality of the soul is not sufficient for him who is condemned like you to the gloomy life of a dungeon. Deism can never be the religion for long afflictions; you have had sad experience of this; and you have thought too much not to be convinced henceforth that, whatever may be its primitive fervour, it is too weak to defend itself against the encroachments of scepticism and materialism; just as you must have come to the persuasion that our own natural sense of justice and injustice is insufficient to fix upon firm foundations our duty towards God and our neighbour. Does it not then follow that we should have had cause to question the justice of the Creator, if he had thus abandoned us to the deceitful light of our reason, without himself giving us a revealed law, laying down the whole of our duties? This revealed law, thanks to the Divine mercy, exists in the books, of which it is of paramount importance to establish the heavenly origin; this, therefore, is of all studies the first and most imperative."

"I know it; and hence it was that I so pressingly asked Don Stephano and the Emperor for a Bible and some other good books; but they were refused me,—irrevocably refused."

"Well, we will study together; and although I cannot let you have books to carry with you into your cell, I will use my efforts at least that you shall read them with me. Happy shall I be, if permitted, as I have no doubt I shall be, to restore to your soul, together with its former belief, peace, resignation, and hope,—happy even, if you find in our interviews any solace to your afflictions; for to console the wretched, by taking part in their anguish, is the most beautiful attribute of our ministry, and I daily ask of God to bless my mournful mission."

"He will bless it," I replied in a voice which betrayed the deep emotion of my soul: "the soothing tears which you have drawn from my eyes are a sure promise of it. Long is it since I have shed any but the most bitter ones. May God reward you, father, for the good you have already done me by your indulgence and charity! Your words, be assured, have found their way to my heart, and they will bring forth fruit."

The countenance of the young priest beamed with ineffable joy. There was so much gratitude towards God and love of his fellow-creatures in his looks, that I threw myself into his arms as into those of a brother; and when I heard him utter, in the voice of an angel, "May the Lord have pity on thee, poor afflicted one!" it seemed like a benediction from Heaven.

Profoundly affected, I would have immediately knelt down before him, to reconcile myself to God and to myself; but he prevented me with the words, "Your conversion, to be efficacious and lasting, must be the result of deep conviction. This must be the object of our future interviews, as also that of your meditations."

The advice was wise, and I followed it with ardour: all my thoughts were directed, with more intensity than ever, to the examination of religious truth; and great was my joy when, by an extraordinary piece of good fortune, I obtained possession for several days of the *Pensées de Pascal* which we had recently saved from seizure. This to me was a gift of Providence, a certain guide in the solution of the problem which I was desirous of working out. I shall not mention from whence or how this inestimable volume came into my hands; but to this very day do I with all my heart invoke the blessings of Heaven on him to whom I was indebted for it.

The very first pages of this excellent book convinced me that the intuitive feelings of the heart, and the light of reason, are insufficient to banish from our mind the uncertainties and doubts to which our passions unceasingly give rise; that a revelation was indispensable, to guide man in his belief and set his conscience at rest; and that the Creator has given us that law in the Holy Scriptures. What does it matter then if there are mysteries in the Bible beyond our reason?—if, to use the words of Pascal, original sin and its transmission, the gordian knot of our religion, are not only contrary to our reasoning faculties, but also to our miserable ideas of justice? Predestination, against which our heart often rebels with regard to free-will and the beings voluntarily created by God and destined by him to endless tortures, in the eye of faith must be received as a terrible and impenetrable mystery, of which we shall doubtless have the solution at some future time, but which by no means should preclude us from adoring God, and meriting by our works to receive the rewards promised by the Redeemer to those who follow his laws.

As I said this one day to the excellent Wrba, he exclaimed, "Certainly, certainly: what is the use of our losing ourselves in the mysteries of predestination and free-will, when once assured that the sacred books are sent us by the Almighty? There lies the question; and the moment we resolve it in the affirmative, there is no longer any need to inquire what we shall believe or not; but we must silence our headstrong reason, and supplicate God to instruct our hearts to love and to obey him."

"Yes," I replied, "this is indeed all; and in this, in my opinion, consists the superiority of Pascal over all other theological writers. He is the only one who has met the question fairly and openly, by saying, 'The Christian religion, I am aware, is contrary to all the tendencies of our nature. Original sin, I own, is but foolishness to the comprehension of man; but this foolishness, far more wise than human wisdom, is announced to us in books, of which, after having read and studied them, it is impossible to deny the Divine origin. Therefore read and examine them with me, and when you have become convinced that they were dictated by the Deity, bow your head and worship. Whatever proceeds from God can only be justice and truth.'"

"You fill my heart with inexpressible delight," answered the pious ecclesiastic. "I rejoice at the hope that this conviction of a preternatural and divine law will strike root in your soul, and supply you with unceasing consolation. But, after admitting this law, it is still requisite to acknowledge some superior authority ever at hand to interpret it; because God, as your Fénelon says, in giving to man a written law, would have neglected the necessity, felt almost by every one, of having also a certain and infallible expositor to prevent the book of his laws becoming, if left to his free examination, a baleful cause of confusion, doubt, and discord. This certain and infallible expositor we have in the Catholic Church, which comprises in itself the authority of all ages, and the earliest traditions of the human race. It is impossible, after a thorough study of the Scriptures, to underrate the strength of the promises which Christ made to his Church, in telling it that whatsoever it should bind on earth would be bound in Heaven; that he would be with it for ever; that the gates of hell should never prevail against it; that those who listened to its mandates, listened therein to his; that those who despised it, therein despised him; and that, in a word, it is the great basis and column of truth. With what hope of success can Protestants reject the authority of these promises, and sustain that the interpretation of the sacred writings belongs to reason alone; and that every believer possesses, in his own heart, a sovereign arbiter of what he is to admit or deny in matters of worship? How have they been led to suppose that the Catholic Church, in declaring itself the one depository of faith, has arrogated a right founded neither in the text of Scripture nor in tradition? On the contrary, the apostles of the reformed religion had no title to substitute their own authority for that of the Church, enforced by the Evangelists themselves, sanctioned by Councils, and by the universal assent of Christendom during fifteen centuries. While the first apostles attested their mission by the purity of their manners and the sanctity of their life, the men who proclaimed themselves sent to put an end to the scandalous life of the Catholic clergy, and to all the superstitions with which Popery had overwhelmed the Christian religion, exhibited to the world nothing but disorder and discord. And who, after all, were Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, and Henry the Eighth? Men whose whole souls were given up to ambition or concupiscence,—who, tired of putting a curb on their passions, took advantage of the abuses introduced among the discipline of the Church, to cast off the salutary restraint which is indispensable to the maintenance of faith. What has resulted from this mad-brained Protestantism, this separation from the tree of life? Your great Bossuet has told us: the Reformers, rejecting all authority but that of the conclusions of their own intellect, wavering on from doubt to doubt, from heresy to heresy, soon divided themselves into twenty different sects, each one as inimical to the others as it is to the Catholic Church. The spirit of reformation is, in general, nothing but a spirit of rebellion against all existing authorities; and had Luther and Zuinglius, as the celebrated Starck observes, been allowed to revisit earth a hundred years after their death, they would no longer have recognised the work of their hands; so many changes have been introduced into the professions of faith, which, in the Protestant religion, have succeeded one another like leaves upon the trees: so much so, that at this very moment they would stone any one in Germany who should uphold that the Confession of Augsburg, which was a sort of gospel in the seventeenth century, has any claim upon the conscience. Having experienced, my young friend, to what a system of unlimited inquiry in matters of religion may lead us, you can yourself judge, by analogy, what it must have produced among the many sects of Protestantism; but you will still better understand this, when we have together read through several modern authors who have gone to the bottom of these important subjects, and you will then see *whence you start and to what you arrive* when you reject the authority of the Church, and embark on the sea of religious controversy without its infallible needle to guide you."

By the charitable assistance of the worthy Wrba, I studied several works of theology, by which I became thoroughly and for ever convinced that there is but one truth; and that this truth, whence all others originate, can only be found in the Catholic religion. Out of Catholicism there is nothing but doubt and error; for in tracing itself by an uninterrupted chain of traditions from the present Pope to Saint Peter, to Moses, the Patriarchs, the very origin of the world, it thus places our belief under the safeguard of an immovable and infallible authority, and guarantees our faith from dissensions. Protestantism, on the contrary, by separating itself from Catholicism, and advocating free inquiry in matters of religion, opens the way to a thousand interpretations and a thousand discussions, thus weakening and destroying faith, which can only be preserved in all its purity by a fixed and visible authority,—a Church, which shall say to all, to the wise as to the foolish, to the king as to the peasant, "This is the true sense of the Holy Scriptures; this is what you have to believe; these are the laws which you must obey."

Such were the religious convictions at which I arrived, not without long conflicts between my pride and my reason; such the result of the pious conversations I had with our new spiritual director. After this, that excellent and most tolerant of men said to me, in the words of Pascal, "Now that you have examined and are convinced, close the book, and practise its precepts; for when we know Him, it is required of us by God that we should adore and serve him. Nowhere could you better serve and love him than in the state of misery and sorrow you have to endure,—a state which, if you are resigned to it, is more meritorious in his eyes than that of the angels who worship him in enjoyment and pleasure. Give yourself up wholly to our blessed Redeemer; humble yourself before his cross; offer up your tears to him; suffer for his sake, and your tribulations, doubt not, shall be changed into consolation and hope. Be patient! Remember, that the God of Mercy commands us to forgive those who persecute us, and to love one another. Burdensome are your chains, I know: would to Heaven, my brother, that I might bear them in your stead! But resignation will lighten their weight, and the period of suffering will give place, even here below, to days of joy. This I daily ask for you in my prayers."

He then continued with holy inspiration, "I hope that this will be fulfilled, that you will again revisit your country and family, again be restored to the world. O may then your conduct bear testimony to our blessed religion! This is a sacred duty which you have to fulfil towards God and your fellow-creatures who may be disposed to listen to you and follow your example. Happy, a thousandfold happy, will you be, if, by your means, a doubt rises up in their mind and is followed by their conversion; for the salvation of a soul is of more worth in the eyes of Christ than the conquest of all the kingdoms of the earth. Promise me then, my young friend, not to be ungrateful to Providence. Let no human respect ever prevent your manifesting, on any opportunity, your religious convictions, and accomplishing your mission."

I promised him, with an outburst of gratitude, and we terminated this pious colloquy, according to our usual custom, by reading the consoling discourse of our Saviour after his last supper, in the Gospel of St. John.

CHAPTER XXII.

After having in some degree regained my calmness, I could at last, without abandoning myself to despair, again turn my thoughts to the dear objects which for some time I had no longer dared to invoke. I felt a conviction that at the very moment in which I fancied myself deserted by God, they had been doing their utmost in my behalf; and deeply was I moved with gratitude when, after recovering liberty, I found in my sister's Journal new proofs of their unabated devotion. I here transcribe a few passages from this precious record.

" *Paris, Dec.* 31*st,* 1826.—For several months I have left off my diary. Nevertheless, at the close of the year I am fain to commit to it such signs of life as now and then reach us from Spielberg. Two notes have been received by us since my return from Milan, both addressed by Prince Metternich to Count Appony, who has forwarded them to us with instant attention. But they only said that his imperial Majesty having, by a special order, deigned to allow the relatives of Alexander

Andryane to be informed every half-year of his health, Count Appony was instructed to announce to them that the prisoner was as well as could be expected.

"The official brevity of such messages rendered them more afflicting than consoling; but a new hope has, within the last few months, given us relief. One of my best friends enjoys the confidence of the Princess of Wagram, the daughter of the King of Bavaria, and cousin-german to the Empress, and has spoken to her of our sorrows. Prior even to any direct solicitation, her Highness had declared that she would use all her interest in behalf of my brother; and she wrote, in fact, with as much fervour as if the happiness of her life had depended on the success of her prayer. The long-looked-for reply arrived after three months of expectation, and I read, with many tears, that the Empress had failed in her humane endeavours, *because the Emperor, as a point of duty, could not comply with the impulses of his own heart, which inclined him to clemency.* The poor Countess Confalonieri has written to me several times. In vain does she weary out her life to afford some aid to her husband: all is lost to her also. This, then, is all we have been able to do in 1826. May it please Heaven to show us greater mercy in the ensuing year!"

"*Paris, Dec.* 31*st*, 1827.—The prayer uttered a twelvemonth ago has not been granted. It has been so ordained by Providence; let not a murmur escape our lips! The early part of this year brought with it a new affliction. Countess Frecavalli, with whom I became so intimate at Milan, died suddenly, after a short illness. The Countess Confalonieri sent me the news, written in the utmost grief. Poor angel, to how many trials is she doomed! Another prop of hope is thus snatched away.

"Theresa, in one of her letters, strongly insisted on our unceasingly making supplications to the Emperor; and, for the third time since my return from Milan, my father-in-law has sent to his Majesty a most touching appeal. We counted the days, in the expectation of receiving some glimmer of hope, when a letter from a confidential friend at Vienna plunged us again into a state of absolute despair. It informed us in the most positive terms that the Emperor, satisfied with the conduct of Alexander, and moved by the continual applications we had made to him, was on the verge of yielding; but, in consequence of the denunciations made against him by one of his companions in misfortune, representing him as still unreclaimed, the gates of Spielberg are more firmly barred against his release than ever. What an accumulation of calamities! to be on the eve of the termination of a horrible captivity, and to see it thus prolonged for an indefinite time!"

Thanks to the deep conviction that I had acquired of the truths of the Catholic religion, I now experienced a sense of tranquillity of mind, such as I had not known for many months. This was a boon from Heaven,—an armour of patience and fortitude to aid me to support the distress with which the increasing weakness of my sight, caused by the obscurity of our dungeon, afflicted me. I had continually solicited Count Insaghi, then

Governor of Moravia, to remove me into the adjoining prison, which I knew to be less dark than mine; but he gave me for answer that it was not in his power, and that he would apply to his Majesty on the subject.

After waiting several weeks, I was apprised that the Emperor had given a refusal to my request, which after all if he had granted would have been but a small favour. Compelled to abstain from writing on the walls, on account of the strain upon my eyes,—prevented, by the strict watch of M. Wergrat, from conversing with Pellico and Maroncelli, or corresponding with Confalonieri,—I should have been left a prey to the irksomeness of captivity and the miseries of approaching blindness, had I not found relief in my religious belief and in some intellectual occupations. I had, in the *Pensées de Pascal* and the *Confessions de Saint Augustin*, which a friendly hand procured me from time to time, an inexhaustible source of meditation. I felt, by the consolations which I drew from these works, that I was at last in the ways of truth; and truth has so many charms, that at times I passed whole days in evolving some one of the profound reflections of Pascal, even renouncing my daily walk rather than interrupt the train of my ideas.

"What! do you again refuse taking any exercise?" said the guard appointed to accompany me one morning: "are you ill?"

"No, but it is too cold; I would rather remain where I am."

"Well," he replied, "I shall not put the padlock on the door, and if you change your mind you have only to knock."

I thanked him for his attention, and again threw myself on my mattress, to indulge freely in my meditations; but my mind, fatigued by being too long kept on the stretch, soon abandoned its serious thoughts for the recollections of my better days. In this state I fell into a slight slumber, and experienced a sensation of sorrow when I was roused from my state of dreaminess by the creaking of the bolts of my door, though I still kept my eyes closed and feigned to be asleep. Supposing it to be one of the jailers entering to inspect the prison, I did not move; but what was my surprise when a slight clatter of chains struck my ear, and half opening my eyes I beheld a woman,—the first I had seen since my arrival at Spielberg! She was clothed in white, and I should have taken her for a vision, or for some holy member of a pious community, if the clanking of her irons had not betrayed her to be one of those unfortunate creatures who expiate at Spielberg the offences they have committed against the laws.

She started on seeing me, and uttered a shriek; but finding that I did not move, she supposed me ill or asleep. She was tall and slender, and on her approaching near enough for me to observe her features, she seemed to me so beautiful, with her glossy auburn locks, her blue eyes, long eyelashes and rosy lips, that forgetting her degraded condition, I should have arisen to speak to her, if the voice of the keepers echoing in the corridor had not made me fear to be overheard. She was only about twenty years old, and seemed to me so modest, so artless in her demeanor, so very much superior to a woman of low extraction, that I recoiled from the idea that so charming a creature could have been guilty of a crime.

Who could she be, and what had she done, were the first questions I asked myself; and which I would fain have had answered, though at the cost of days and weeks of *carcere durissimo.* Poor creature! what pity did she excite in my heart, when I beheld her bring an enormous pail of water which one of her companions had left at the door, and kneeling down, with a wisp of straw proceeded to scrub the floor! How graceful she appeared to me in that humble posture, and how much was I affected by the precautions which she took not to disturb me! The operation, as she bent down, was painful, and she often stopped to take breath; in doing which she would raise up her head, and display her fine features. Her eyes met mine in one of these changes of position: she blushed, appeared frightened, and would have left the room; but I said to her softly, "Continue your work, do not be afraid;" and she remained, without daring to resume her work, or again to turn her astonished looks towards me.

"Calm yourself," I whispered; "calm yourself, my good girl: the person who speaks to you is not a common convict; of that you must be well aware. You have nothing to fear from me. Look at me, I entreat you, and tell me who you are, and how you chance to be in this horrible situation, young as you are, and apparently so guiltless."

Tears gushed from her eyes at these words.

"You do not answer me," I said in a still more persuasive tone: "is your crime then so great?"

"My God! my God!" cried the poor girl; "oh that I were dead!"

"Hush, hush!" I murmured, putting my finger on my lips: "speak lower. How many years' imprisonment are you sentenced to?"

"Fifteen," she replied, sobbing.

"And have you been here long?"

"Rather more than eighteen months."

"Poor girl! and how old are you?"

"One-and-twenty."

"And you are a native of—"

She made no reply, and preserved the same silence on my inquiring her name.

"But," I continued, "it is impossible that you can be guilty of any serious crime: your countenance, the air of innocence about you, would prevent my believing such a thing, however I might be assured of it."

"Ah! mine is a very sad story," she at last said, sighing bitterly; "but God will take pity on me, and give me strength to support my unhappy lot."

"You have then faith in his mercy?" I asked.

She raised her eyes to Heaven, joined her hands, and prayed.

"May thy prayer be granted!" I added, with difficulty overcoming the emotion which this reliance on the Divine goodness made me feel. And I was about to leave my bed, to be still nearer to the poor young woman, when the sound of steps and voices prevented me. I remained on my pallet, pretending to be asleep, while the poor convict, terrified at the noise of the oaths resounding through the corridor, began again to scrub the floor.

This noise was made by our jailer, who, furious at his comrades having by mistake introduced her into my cell, rated them with bitter oaths.

"Get up!" he cried, standing on the threshold, "get up! since it has so happened, you must move into another prison."

I obeyed, but slowly and with regret; and I should have departed I own with a still heavier heart, had not the young girl turned upon me a gentle and supplicating look, which seemed to express, "Thanks for your compassion and charity! Believe me I am not altogether unworthy." She read in my eyes that I had comprehended her, for a flash of joy beamed in her features, and as I passed her she seized my hand and carried it respectfully to her lips.

"Come, come along!" repeated the keeper, who had been prevented by the gloom of the prison from observing us. "Come, I must get this job finished."

Before the door was closed I once again turned towards the young convict, who had already resumed her fatiguing work. I gazed upon her, and, my heart filled with pity, I murmured, "May God watch over thee, poor victim!"

The impression which this unfortunate being had produced upon me was too vivid and profound to be effaced for some time. Her graceful features, her touching physiognomy, her flowing tresses, appealing at once to my eyes and my soul, had recalled many intoxicating delights never more to be enjoyed. Bitter tears bathed my burning cheeks, sorrowful sighs breathed from my breast, as I repeated an unconnected string of words expressive of my grief.

Worn out by ennui, and dead to life, I felt nevertheless that the cares of a sweet companion would soon revive me, that her tenderness would reanimate my drooping soul, and by her side I should again enjoy bliss. I pictured her to myself, good, beautiful, indulgent, equable in temper, elevated in mind, pure in imagination. I even fancied her sweet voice dissipating the sorrows of my spirit, as the harp of David dispelled the dark fury of his soul; and I so identified myself with all the delightful scenes of conjugal life, that a mortal pang overwhelmed me each time my dream was ended. Then stark reality reminded me that all my desires were in vain,—that, if ever my prison doors were opened, I should pass them an old and shattered sufferer, incapable of uniting my fate with the angel of innocence and beauty who dwelt unceasingly in my thoughts. How bitter were the pangs I then experienced! Insensate that I was, not to hope everything from the goodness of that merciful God, who reserved for me the days of recompense by putting an end to my captivity, and giving me for a companion an accomplished woman, who even surpasses in the reality all that the imagination of the prisoner could have conceived, and who makes me repeat every day of my existence, "Thou hast more than recompensed me, O Lord, for my long years of sorrow;

Thou hast given to me more than I had ever before possessed!"

And who was this unhappy young woman, the sight of whom had awakened in my soul such bitter regrets? by what chain of circumstances had she become an inmate of Spielberg? This occupied my thoughts all the evening, and the next day I asked my guard to tell me.

"What has she done!" he repeated; "i' faith, I do not very well know, but I think it was coining."

"Coining?" I inquired with astonishment.

"Yes, or rather forging bank-notes, which comes to the same thing. They say she did so at the instigation of her father; but who is to believe that? I do not deny that she is very different from the other convicts: all the keepers say of her that she is quiet and docile, and prays to God; though a good many people do that without being a bit the less wicked. However, as you want to know her history, I will inquire, and let you know it tomorrow."

The following day he did in fact inform me that she belonged to a good family, had received an excellent education, and had been condemned to imprisonment and hard labour, as well as her brothers, for having attempted by their counsel to prevent the total ruin of their father by means of forged notes. "The poor thing did not know the risk she exposed herself to," added the soldier; "and the judges would have had compassion on her youth, if she had consented to give evidence against her brothers; but they could only extort from her that she did not know she was doing wrong, and that she begged forgiveness of God. Whether her story is true or not I cannot tell: all I can say is, that she was convicted, which she would not have been if she had yielded to the desires of a certain judge. But who can tell? these convicts are so deep, and such hands at lying. She however is the best we have here; so sad, so pious and resigned, that it would melt your heart. It is a very hard thing for her, at twenty years of age, and such a pretty creature too, to suffer such a sentence. They say she would have died long ago but for her reliance on the blessed Virgin, whom she unceasingly invokes."

The account of the soldier, although incomplete, had relieved my heart: it permitted me to conclude that the unhappy girl, whose melancholy features were ever present in my thoughts, was not to be considered one of those wretches whom premeditated crime had conducted to Spielberg: I had therefore no reason to repent having taken an interest in her. While I commiserated her, I could admire and bless the influence of our holy religion, which sustained the poor afflicted one in the midst of such dreadful trials, and had saved her, I delighted to whisper to myself, from the baleful contagion with which vice and crime surrounded her in this infamous abode: I even persuaded myself that she would escape, through the divine protection of the Mother of Him from whom springs our every hope, from the dangers with which she was environed.

Full of this thought, on the following Sunday, when at church, I offered up a fervent prayer to the Queen of Heaven for the salvation and deliverance of the young convict. Never had I attended divine service with such devotion, never had I so strongly felt how much consolation, confidence, happiness even, the Catholic religion could inspire in those believers who suffered for the love of God. Never had I so strongly recognised, as in the pale and beautiful countenance of the young Capuchin who administered the mass, how much superhuman sublimity was comprised in that faith which puts all its glory in poverty and suffering. It seemed to me, as I gazed on him, that no sacrifice could from henceforth quell my courage, that I should remain patient and resigned under all circumstances and to the very last; and I only requested of God, raising my eyes to the grated gallery where Confalonieri was seated, that he would grant me the blessing of being allowed once more to devote all my care to my friend.

My eyes at last fell upon poor Colonel Moretti, who, like myself, always alone, was seated at the other end of the chapel. At seeing him appear feeble and haggard, so much commiseration filled my heart, that, as we were leaving the church, I rushed towards him, and despite the presence of the jailers, took him by the hand and said, "Why are not we placed together?"

"That," he replied, "would be too great a happiness."

We separated, alas, never to meet again upon earth, —it was his fate to die on the soil of the stranger!

CHAPTER XXIII.

A FEW days after, M. Wergrat suddenly made his appearance in my dungeon and desired me to follow him. On my inquiring whether the Governor had consented to my removal to a cell less gloomy, my guide answered, with an air of mystery, "Better than that: come with me, and you will see."

Hope is so strong in the mind of a prisoner, that my expectations extended even to liberation. This, however, was only a fleeting idea, which vanished the moment I had crossed the threshold of my dungeon and had taken some steps along the corridor. On we went, passing by several cells, which I presumed to be empty. Then the blessed thought that I was going to be reunited with Confalonieri dawned upon my soul; but I soon rejected it on recollecting that the Bishop of Cattaro had told me that the Emperor repented of having placed us together, and there appeared no probability that his Majesty had changed his opinion.

Meanwhile we continued to walk on through the corridor: the doors of the cells of Pallavicini, Borsieri, Castillia, were already behind us; that of the Count alone remained. What was my emotion and joy when this last door opened, and Wergrat said, "You are going to be placed with your former companion"!

I turned—I rushed into the room—it was empty! Cruelly disappointed, I turned to my conductor to reproach him for this unnecessary mystification, when he forestalled me by the announcement that my friend was at that moment with the priest.

After some minutes of painful expectation, I heard hurried steps and the clank of chains in the corridor. The door opened immediately afterwards, and I found myself in the arms of my Confalonieri, who, like myself, was so affected with joy at our reunion, that for some moments he could not utter a word.

"What an unhoped-for happiness," I at last said, "again to find myself near you! what a compensation for the torments of the past—what a relief for those which await us!"

"The greatest consolation," he replied, "which I could wish for in Spielberg was that of being reunited to you, though I little thought it would be granted me."

"Let us," I said, "bless the day which affords us such happiness. How many months have elapsed since I saw you! what anxiety have I felt on your account, for your health, your project of escape!"

"I gave that up," he quickly replied, "lest I should have committed any one." And in a few words he related how his conscience had induced him to forgo this last anchor of safety.

"Have you had any news from Italy, your friends, or your Countess?" I asked.

"None," he replied with dejection; "and I am afraid that the vigilance of Wergrat will never allow me to receive any more. Alas! I had calculated upon you, had you been delivered, for informing my poor Theresa of all which relates to me; but as this happiness was not reserved for me, I submit to my destiny. But come—now tell me all that you have undergone since our separation."

I gave him an account of all my restraint and annoyances during the long days I had passed with S——; and mentioned also the conduct of the Bishop of Cattaro, who was the cause of all the evils which we suffered. We then conversed about our different companions in misfortune and the dreadful ravages which captivity had made in their health; we grieved together for poor Maroncelli, whose leg began to give him the greatest distress, and for Pellico, who suffered more from the ailments of his friend than if he had been attacked by them himself. After this we proceeded to talk on matters of religion.

"All my objections," said I to him, after describing the anguish I had endured since our separation, "have vanished before the truth, the moment I was convinced that the Scriptures are a Divine revelation. Predestination and original sin, at which my reason had long revolted, I have adopted as truths, whose first cause is doubtless inexplicable, but real, and indispensable to the solution of the problem of the fallen nature of man, that strange mixture of grandeur and weakness; and I came to the same result yet more easily with the other mysteries. As for the dreadful sentence, that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that there is no salvation out of the pale of the Church, I also recognised its wisdom and justice; for, admitting that the Almighty has spoken, and that truth exists, we must come to the conclusion that all besides this is error and falsehood,—trusting however with Saint Augustine, that none will be damned but those who have not profited by what they knew, in order to learn more. On unity in matters of faith depends the stability of religion itself. Hence also arises, in my eyes, the necessity of admitting the authority of the Catholic Church as the infallible interpreter of the Sacred Writings, because Jesus Christ has instituted it as such; and I am convinced by my own experience, and by the example of Protestantism, that a liberty of examination and interpretation of the revealed law can only conduce to confusion and incredulity. This, my friend, is my creed: I am a Catholic from reason and feeling, with the firm conviction that Catholicism, far from retarding the progress of truth, or acting in opposition to liberal ideas, can only, when well understood, favour the development of civilization. This, one of the most important and most difficult of all religious problems, being once solved, my only remaining desire was to let this conviction of the intellect become, through God's grace, a positive belief of the heart. This I daily ask of Him from whom springs all love and faith."

"I have never doubted," replied Confalonieri, after having listened to me with deep attention, "that you would arrive at this inevitable conclusion, which will supply your soul with peace and consolation: I am glad to think that the conversations we shall continue to have with the worthy Wrba will tend to confirm you more and more in this salutary belief, the one which can alone equally satisfy the reason, the mind, and the heart. May we long retain this excellent ecclesiastic, of whose true charity we have already received so many proofs. His loss would be an irreparable misfortune; I dread the very contemplation of it. But each day brings its own sorrows; let us enjoy the present good which God sends us, leaving our sad future in His hands."

"Yes; let us rejoice in the happiness of being united: this is the essential point, the basis of our courage and resignation. As to the rest, trust to Providence."

The day which followed my reunion with Confalonieri being a Sunday, I had the happiness of again seeing and embracing, as we went to mass, Castillia, Borsieri, and Pallavicini. They were much thinner than when I last saw them; and I was shocked to observe with what sudden rapidity imprisonment had effected the transition in them from the freshness of youth to the feebleness and wrinkles of age. The painful impression I had felt on first seeing them had been considerably softened on learning that they sustained their lot with perfect resignation; but the appearance of Pellico, more pale and weak than ever, again plunged my heart into affliction and discouraged me. Poor Silvio! his mild countenance was melancholy, and bore evident traces of his anxiety for the alarming state of Maroncelli.

"I very much fear," said Borsieri to me in a tone of the deepest sorrow, "that Pellico will sink under this new trial: his life hangs on a thread, which will certainly be broken if Maroncelli is taken from him. And so we shall all end; some sooner, some later, we shall all pay the tribute of death to this inexorable captivity."

On leaving the chapel at the very moment when, more than ever desirous of soothing our mental sorrows, we were compelled to return to our prisons in silence, pursuant to the injunctions of M. Wergrat, who suddenly made his appearance. Ever after that time we were each Sunday compelled to walk at a distance from each other, and prevented from exchanging the few words which, prior to this mandate, had been one of our dearest pleasures.

Another consolation, the most salutary of all which God had granted us, was yet to be taken away. The charitable Wrba, whose pious conversation afforded us a constant source of instruction and encouragement, was replaced by another priest named Ziack, chosen by Don Stephano to be our confessor in ordinary. I cannot describe the grief which filled my heart on learning that I was to lose the beneficent lessons of the estimable Wrba; at the moment of parting with him my tears flowed in abundance, and I threw myself into his arms unable to utter a word.

"Console yourself," he said in a kind tone; "Father Ziack is a clergyman much respected, and with him you will be perfectly satisfied; you can continue your religious instructions, for he is very learned and full of zeal."

But I still wept, knowing well that I should never again meet with a friend so tender, so candid, and so animated with the love of God and of his fellow-men as our much-regretted Wrba. His persuasive words, full of piety and truth, never failed to go to our heart and ease our affliction. Always guided by compassion and indulgence, he knew how to condole with and encourage us, because he comprehended all the miseries of our situation, and did not, like Don Stephano, require us to lay aside our dearest affections and hope to give ourselves up to repentance and another life. The good that he did me was incalculable, for to him do I owe my re-admission into the bosom of the Catholic religion, to say nothing of the alleviations which he exerted himself to procure for me during the short time I had the happiness of enjoying his ministrations. May his name be ever revered and blessed in my heart and in those dear to me; and may he receive here, as well as in a better world, the reward for the inestimable benefits which he conferred on the unhappy prisoners of Spielberg.

My affliction at the departure of this good priest had not yet subsided when I was destined to fresh calamity. In the course of October 1828, the Director of Police sent for me. On my coming into his presence he said, "I am ordered by his Majesty to communicate this letter from your sister."

"From my sister!" I exclaimed; "oh give it to me, let me see it!"

"That I cannot do; I am only to read it to you!"

I cannot convey an idea of my impatience and anxiety in learning, doled out as it were word by word, that my poor father finding himself dangerously ill, my family had petitioned the Emperor to allow me to send them a deed of trust, necessary and valid in France, where I was not dead in the eye of the law.

"Ah!" I exclaimed, interrupting the Director, "then my father is no more! I know he must be dead."

"No, no; reassure yourself; it is only a matter of precaution: calm yourself, come here, and look—read for yourself."

I sprang towards him, and looked upon the paper; but a flood of tears so dimmed my eyes that I could not distinguish a word.

"Take it," said he, touched with pity by my emotion.

"A thousand thanks," I answered, and I pressed to my lips this first tidings of life which had reached me for nearly five years.

"My poor father is very ill," I sobbed, at each line; "and I shall never see him again! If it were not so my sister would have spared me this distress. After so many years of a mysterious captivity it is sad news which prepares a man for the death of his father! Indeed, who knows but there is also some confidential letter?"

"No, I assure you there is not—nothing but the form of the deed of trust which you will copy and sign. Here are ink and paper."

In spite of my agitation I immediately set to work to transcribe the document, in which I constituted General Eugene Merlin my trustee. This choice gave me full satisfaction, and I was about to express this in the more particular instructions which I asked permission to add to the deed, when the Director, who looked over my shoulder watching attentively every word I traced on the paper, stopped me by observing that it was the command of his Majesty that I should strictly confine myself to that which affected my pecuniary affairs. I therefore was obliged to abstain from any friendly intimation, deeply regretting being unable to offer my thanks to those who afforded me such constant proofs of their generous concern for me.

" May I not at least address a few lines to my sister?" I asked.

" No, I have no authority to allow it."

" Not even one word?"

" Not so much as one word. Now that you have copied this you may go back to your cell."

I returned with a heart full of inquietude concerning my father.

Confalonieri sympathized with me in this new affliction. " They may have exaggerated the evil," he remarked, " to ensure the letter reaching you; and in this you are more fortunate than the rest of us, who have received no tidings of our families since we left Milan. Besides this deed of trust is a plain proof that the Emperor does not intend keeping you here interminably, for if he did what would be the use of it? Keep up your spirits then; you are reserved for happy days yet. Would to Heaven I could be as assured about the fate of Pellico and Maroncelli."

I contrived by means of Caliban to write to these unfortunate friends. Their reply was not such as to afford me any comfort. Maroncelli's knee swelled each day more, and he could no longer bend it; the poor patient grew weaker every day, and was repining in spite of his courage. Pellico himself was but little better than Maroncelli, yet he could still in this sad bulletin find a place for a few words of consolation and hope.

Though our health was not so deplorable as that of Silvio and his ill-fated companion, yet scarcely twenty-four hours passed without our suffering much. Confalonieri, becoming continually more and more weak, laboured under acute and spasmodic pains at the heart and in all the joints of his limbs, which forced him to keep his bed for days; while the weakness of my sight and the acute pain in my eyes made me fear that I should soon go blind. In a short time this became a constant source of disquietude and grief. To guard against such a calamity, I gave up scribbling upon the wall, and applied to the medical attendant of the fortress as well as to the one of the Governor of Moravia, that a consultation might be held upon my case between these members of the faculty. The two doctors having duly visited me, prescribed cataplasms, bleedings, mixtures, and promised that all would go well if I strictly followed their orders. I did so, but gained no relief; the only advantage resulting from their consultation being a green shade, with which by their orders I was supplied, and which I never afterwards left off.

About this time permission was obtained at Vienna to open a door of communication in the wall between our cell and one adjoining, so that we had the gratification of remaining together, enjoying the fresh air at the window, reposing and sleeping separately. No one but a person who has lived, coupled with a companion, in a narrow dungeon for many years can estimate the blessing which the acquisition of a few feet of space are to him.

My delight was soon neutralized by the arrival of the gloomy and endless days of winter, and by violent headaches caused by the suffocating heat of the stove of one of our jailers. In vain every evening did I entreat my disagreeable neighbour not to roast me during the night, and equally in vain every morning did I say to him, pointing to my inflamed face and eyes, "Look, I am quite unable to sleep; I am in a fever; you stifle me: for pity's sake, do not make up such a fire." His only reply was, "What am I to do? I am cold; you must address the Commandant."

Accordingly I did supplicate the Commandant to have a brick partition erected before this stove.

"I cannot accede to your request," he answered, "much as I admit the reasonableness of it: I must first lay it before the Governor."

"What! for a paltry alteration which would scarcely require two hours' labour?" I inquired with astonishment.

"Yes, most certainly."

"But that may take weeks, and in the mean time I may have an illness, perish perhaps; for I am compelled, in order to escape suffocation, to have the window open during part of the night—and that, when the weather is fifteen or sixteen degrees below zero, is dreadful."

"I perfectly admit it is," said the Commandant; "I can only repeat that I must lay your request before the Governor."

His report was made the same day, but his Excellency, finding the matter too weighty for him to act on his own responsibility, wrote to Vienna for orders, from whence no reply came until six weeks afterwards. During all this time I was compelled to wait in suspense, passing whole nights without sleep, in the greatest agony. The imperial sanction having at last arrived, the little inclosure of bricks was formed in some two or three hours, and I was delivered from the torments of sleeplessness.

Some time after, the Director of Police returned to Spielberg and again sent for me. "I am commanded," he said without any further preamble, "to communicate to you a letter from your sister and the trustee you appointed: this is a great favour of his Majesty."

He then bade me listen, and he read as follows:—"Submit, my dear friend, to the decrees of Providence: bear with resignation the irreparable misfortune which is now to be added to so many more; your poor father has sunk under the disease by which he was long and cruelly affected."

On hearing these afflicting tidings, I covered my face with both hands and uttered a deep groan. The Director of Police continued, but I heard no more. The blow had so overpowered me that I remained some moments as it were annihilated, unable even to weep, or utter a complaint, until at last the tears burst from my eyes and I cried, "My father! my poor father!"

"Do you wish to hear the rest of the letter?" asked the Director; "we cannot stay here long."

"Pray grant me a few moments," I answered, endeavouring to restrain my sobs; "the intelligence I have just received is so painful—"

"Certainly; but your father was advanced in years. Listen to what your sister writes." And he proceeded to read.

On hearing, "You were present to his mind till the moment he expired,—his last words were a benediction to the poor prisoner," I felt the most poignant regret that I had not been present. I was even on the point of kneeling down, to implore pardon of God for having inflicted so many pangs on my aged parent, when the Director prevented me, saying he had another letter to communicate, in which I was asked for a new deed of trust, the former not being valid.

I stretched my hand to the letter, as he placed it on the table, and he permitted me, after some objection, to look at it; but a few seconds had scarcely elapsed before he cried with impatience, "Have you not yet done?"

"Only one instant more, if you please: the loss of a father is distressing in every position of life; but here—"

"We must now attend to the document which your sister requires. Here is the proper form; transcribe it."

I took up the pen, and wrote without understanding a word of what I was copying, so overwhelmed was I by the thought that this perhaps was the last time I should receive any tidings from home. On concluding, I inquired of the Director whether I might supplicate his

Majesty to allow that I should write to my trustee for a statement of my father's affairs at the time of his death.

"I have no instructions on that point," he replied; "but you may prepare your request if you like, and I will forward it to the Governor, leaving the matter to his judgement."

After drawing up the petition I begged permission to answer a few words to my family; but this met with an absolute denial, and I was sent back to my dungeon. Confalonieri was expecting me with anxiety; I threw myself into his arms, sobbing, and told him my father was dead.

"Alas!" he exclaimed; "is our cup of grief inexhaustible!" And with his accustomed tenderness he used every endeavour to soothe my grief.

CHAPTER XXIV.

If the consolations of friendship are precious under the ordinary circumstances of life, they are infinitely more so in a prison, where there is nothing to divert the mind from its misery. But no one ever possessed in a higher degree than Confalonieri the gift of solacing the afflicted, expressing his sympathy by some feeling word which relieved the overwhelmed heart by a salutary flood of tears. After listening to him I regained my fortitude, and I was able to bless God, whose severe yet merciful hand had, even while wounding, given me the balm that was to allay the pain. I received also touching proofs of interest from my other companions in misfortune. Pellico poured out his whole soul in a letter, which was sufficient to prove the inestimable comfort that religion and friendship can bestow even in the midst of the most appalling calamities.

About a month after the news of my father's death, Confalonieri received, after many years of expectation and uneasiness, not a long answer, but a sign of life from his friends. This proof of their constant devotion I should have passed over silently, like many other acts of generosity of which I was the witness and often the subject, if my conscience did not urge me to testify to the noble self-abnegation of him who has a claim to my eternal gratitude. Although there can be no harm in entering into minute details, I shall limit myself to stating, that the keeper, to whom old Schiller had confided our secrets, found means to say to us one evening through the little opening of the wicket, "A man is here at Brünn, the bearer of a letter which he has given me: I have brought it you. He is ready to favour your flight. I myself am disposed to make the attempt, and have prepared everything to execute your escape tomorrow afternoon. Give me therefore your answer in the morning."

Who can describe our agitation at this unexpected announcement? Confalonieri hastened to read the letter, which contained only these words: "Chosen among your exiled friends to assist in your project of flight, I have arrived at Brünn, provided with passports and a good carriage. I shall await the favourable moment; meanwhile prepare yourself. I have brought with me the necessary disguise, a hat, frock-coat, etc. I shall confide them tomorrow to the keeper. Reckon on me as on yourself."

"Well, what say you to this?" asked my friend.

"That we should both fall on our knees and thank God for so great a favour; this unexpected means of flight must be seized instantly and without hesitation. Think of your Theresa—"

"You well know that she is my constant thought, the only tie that attaches me to life. One of my dearest friends informs me that her health is seriously affected, and that my presence alone can relieve her."

"Well then, attempt fearlessly this escape, which will at once save your incomparable wife and yourself; for there is no doubt, my dear friend, that so long as the Emperor lives you will languish in Spielberg, and will perhaps finish your days here."

"I am well aware of that," he replied.

"And," I impatiently exclaimed, "you do not exult in the idea that in twenty-four hours you may be freed from this frightful destiny? I see no sign of joy on your face,—you are gloomy. What are you thinking of?"

"This letter speaks of *one* only; and to leave you here—"

"What matters it? Am I in the same position as you? Have I an adorable wife whose existence depends on my deliverance?"

"For pity's sake say no more," returned Confalonieri: "let me reflect,—I will call you presently." And saying these words he retired to his cell, desiring me to go to bed.

"Do not forget," I added, "that early tomorrow morning you must reply. I will consider everything that may be necessary to your flight, although we have already so many times calculated all the chances. How fortunate that you have only one leg chained! He who serves us is clever and enterprising; I feel certain that you will succeed. Frederick, I entreat you, let the thought of Theresa alone be present to you."

Notwithstanding the desire I felt at such a moment to move about in my dungeon, I seated myself on my pallet, that Confalonieri's reflections might not be disturbed. The evening wore on; the night became dark; the rain fell in torrents; and the wind, driving through the narrow embrasure of the window, shook the frame so violently that I expected every moment it would be dashed to pieces. "I hope that my poor friend will not have such frightful weather tomorrow," said I to myself: "yet the roads will be bad, the cold intense, the fatigue overpowering; and he so weak too! Will he be able to support all these hardships? I trust so; the prospect of again seeing his beloved Theresa will revive his strength."

The wind continued to blow, and when every quarter of an hour the long-resounding cries of the sentinels were mingled with it, I shuddered involuntarily at the idea of the obstacles which that watchfulness opposed to every project of escape. Meanwhile I had heard eleven, twelve, then one o'clock strike, and Confalonieri had not called me,—not moved. I began to apprehend that he had fallen asleep, or that, too weak to endure his emotions, he had been seized by one of those long fainting fits which had alarmed me so much during my journey from Milan to Spielberg. Trembling at this idea, I was about to go to him, when his voice reached my ear. In less than a second I was by his side, and asked anxiously, "What have you resolved?"

"To remain at Spielberg."

"I cannot believe it," I cried: "it is impossible!"

"I will not abandon my companions to their sad fate; I cannot leave you alone, exposed to the displeasure of the Emperor; my conscience and honour forbid me. Had I been able to take you with me, as I hoped to do, I should not have hesitated a moment, for friendship and duty would have alike urged me; but rather than escape alone, I prefer to remain here. I will never profit by any good fortune that may injure my fellow-captives."

"But do you not fulfil a more sacred duty," I asked, "in risking all to rejoin your unhappy Theresa? You will perhaps never have another opportunity: think of this. I beseech you on my knees to come to a more sensible resolution. The sacrifice you are willing to make will be of no service to any of us. On the contrary, there is no doubt that the Emperor will hasten the period of our deliverance when you are no longer in Spielberg. In the name of friendship, do not add to my miseries the regret of having been the cause that you voluntarily condemn yourself to perpetual imprisonment."

I entreated him thus for some time, invoking the name of those dearest to him, but I could not induce him to alter his determination. He merely said, "Enough, enough! I must not desert my post: I will rather die than run the risk of aggravating the fate of those left behind. Such is my will: it is as stubborn as my duty."

I endeavoured to insist still further, but he interrupted me by exclaiming, "In the name of Heaven, spare me: do not force me to reconsider what is irrevocably decided; I have too painfully felt during the past hours how torturing such indecision is, to expose myself to it again. Leave me, Alexander,—I wish to be alone."

Then he pressed me to his heart, and we remained some time speechless in each other's arms, but feeling that our souls were more than ever fraternally united.

The next day Confalonieri made known to the friend who had braved all kinds of dangers to rescue him, that he could not set out; and thus with noble self-devotion, in the mystery of a dungeon in which he was likely to terminate his life, he accomplished the greatest sacrifice that a man of honour could make to his companions in misfortune.

Either the Police suspected something, or new instructions had arrived from Vienna, for some days afterwards we found ourselves subjected to a stricter watch. The officials of Spielberg all redoubled their zeal and activity, and the Director of Police inspected our dungeons more frequently. The Commandant Schmerskek was replaced, and most of the keepers changed; all in short proved to us that we were doomed for ever to the most cruel system of oppression.

Our hearts, it will be easily imagined, were overwhelmed with melancholy. The days dragged slowly on, our conversations became rare and languishing, for hope in the future no longer enlivened them, and the past left too many regrets for us not to avoid it as much as we could. The spring of 1829 glided away without the earth appearing to us to have put on her smiling dress; and the serious uneasiness we began to feel, not only respecting the leg, but the very existence of Maroncelli, made the summer still more miserable. The sufferings which our sick friend endured for many months with heroic courage were agoinizing, and certain to destroy him if speedy means were not taken for his cure. But what could be expected from the care and ability of the physicians of Spielberg? They at first treated the matter lightly, and then tortured him with various violent remedies: but the disorder continued to make frightful progress; it soon became incurable, and amputation alone remained to save the life of our friend.

Pellico has related in his "*Prigioni*," that it was necessary to send to Vienna for permission to perform this operation. When the answer came, the invalid was carried into a cell contiguous to ours; and the evening before undergoing the hazardous operation, in a tender and sad tone he bade us adieu.

The next morning, towards ten o'clock, we understood from the noise in the corridor that the dreadful moment had arrived. What an agony we experienced! How long the minutes appeared to us till M. Wergrat, who had been present at the amputation, came to tell us that it had been successfully performed!

An hour afterwards, when I went on the platform, I saw in a tub not far from our door the leg of the unfortunate Maroncelli. Turning from this sickening sight, I said to myself with an agonizing convulsion of the heart, "It will be only with deadened or mutilated limbs that we shall leave Spielberg, if its gates indeed ever open to us!"

While this accumulation of disasters stifled every earthly hope in my soul, the efforts of my friends and countrymen in my behalf continued unabated, as will be seen by the following extracts from my sister's Journal.

"*Paris, December* 31*st*, 1829.—This year closes, like all those which have preceded it, without any favourable result: it has been spent in fruitless attempts. Since 1825 I have never allowed two months to pass without writing to Prince Metternich, enclosing a letter to Alexander, though I know not whether a single line has ever reached him. Besides this I sought the acquaintance of one who is to be found wherever there is distress to relieve or a tear to dry,—the beautiful and kind Madame Récamier. The grief that oppressed my heart did not fail to awaken her sympathy: she became a tender sister to me, and from the first moment devoted herself to our cause. Through her we gained the interest of M. de Chateaubriand, our Ambassador at Rome, as also that of the Prince de Montmorency-Laval, the representative of France at Vienna. Madame Récamier forwarded several letters of mine to the latter, writing at the same time herself, with that warmth of heart that never fails to persuade; and the Prince, after so many pressing solicitations, was kind enough to send me the following details, dated Vienna, August 28th.

"'The steps I have taken up to the present time have not been ill received, but they have been fruitless. I am now convinced that, if there exists any way of obtaining the liberty of your unfortunate brother, it can only be by a direct appeal to the Emperor's heart: all other means are powerless. This step I engage myself to take, madam. I have nothing to ask of him for myself; and I assure you that your brother's deliverance, which I pray Heaven to grant me, will bring as sweet a satisfaction to my heart as to your own.'

"The excellent man wrote also to Madame Récamier, that nothing at Vienna would gratify him more than success in his endeavours to allay our grief. Last September, when he returned to Paris from his embassy, I waited on him almost immediately after his arrival. He said to me, 'I should have been delighted, madam, if I had been the chosen instrument of Providence to put an end to your sorrow. I went to Lintz to take leave of the Emperor: according to custom he inquired if he could do anything that might be agreeable to me, and I answered, "Your Majesty may indeed do me a favour that would make me happy for life, by granting the liberty of Andryane." The Emperor replied, that he regretted this was impossible, that your brother was with Confalonieri, of whom he knew all the secrets, and neither of the two prisoners was yet sufficiently amended. He did not permit me to urge my prayer any further; nevertheless I can assure you that the matter hangs by a thread. Set out for Vienna; believe me, this is the only chance of success. If I did not know that your fortune enables you to defray the expenses of the journey, I should have been happy, very happy, to offer my services in order that you might undertake it.'

"I could only reply by tears to this noble and touching kindness. The Prince was himself affected; and when, on leaving him, I entreated him to grant me the means of showing my gratitude, he replied, pressing my hand, 'Pray for my mother!'

"It has been impossible to follow his benevolent advice, my health being unequal to sustain so long a journey at the end of the autumn. I must therefore remain with the distracting idea that this great duty is postponed.

"The letters of the Countess Confalonieri become less frequent and shorter. She seeks in vain to hide from me that the excess of her grief is bringing her to the grave. A brazen wall seems to surround Spielberg, and the failure of each attempt to succour the prisoners hastens her decline."

The statement of our domestic affairs which I had asked of my agent, in order thereby to obtain some intelligence of my family, was brought to me some months afterwards by the Director of Police, accompanied by a letter, the first lines of which informed me of a series of disasters, lost law-suits, property destroyed by fire, etc. The impression this announcement made on me was painful, and I exclaimed, "Providence has nothing in store for me but misfortunes!"

After the letter came detailed, voluminous accounts, the listening to which was long and tedious, for I had to learn through the medium of the almost unintelligible French pronunciation of the Director, the successive losses that my family had undergone. When he had concluded, he said, "His Majesty permits you to write instructions, if you desire to do so: here is a pen and paper."

"It is impossible that I should answer immediately," I replied; "I have only been able to gather the principal facts of the statement. It would be necessary for me to retain these papers several days, or I shall run the risk of falling into errors that might prove very prejudicial to our interests."

"I understand; if you wish, I will read it to you once more."

"It will be a great fatigue, and you may avoid it, sir, if you will allow me to look over the documents myself."

After some discussion the Director consented to allow me to look hastily over the manuscript, which he held carefully in his own hands.

"Will that do?" he asked after a few minutes: "you may now take up your pen."

"Impossible! my ideas of the whole are too imperfect for me to form an opinion: I should want a few days' reflection; can you not grant them?"

After consulting with his secretary, he answered in the affirmative.

"Can you leave me the papers?" I said.

"That I cannot do: it is enough that I have permitted you to look at their contents."

I was about to answer that my instructions would be useless, and that I gave up all idea of sending any; but the thought of my relatives occurred to me, and I quitted him, saying, "Tomorrow, or the day after,—whenever you please, I shall be ready."

On my return to our cell Confalonieri inquired kindly whether I had again received distressing news. "Yes, my friend," I answered; "Providence sends me fresh trials. I shall shortly resign myself, I have no doubt; yet today I feel bitterly, especially what relates to my beloved relatives. The accounts I have received show that my paternal fortune is cruelly impaired. I am called upon for instructions, which require a considerable study of the statement that has been sent me, since some decided steps must be taken, and yet I can scarcely obtain permission to examine the documents."

A few days after this I wrote, in the presence of the Director of Police, some observations suggested by the superficial reading of the above papers. I saw, alas! I must own, by the regret that I felt at the loss of a splendid patrimony, how much I still clung to the pleasures and enjoyments of the world.

CHAPTER XXV.

The beginning of 1830 brought with it an increased weakness of sight. I followed in vain the prescriptions of the physician; the pain augmented, the optic nerve was affected, and I already felt the desolating conviction of approaching blindness. I earnestly entreated the physician of Spielberg to make a report, in order that an oculist might be sent to visit me. He pitied me, and promised all I wished, but nothing came of his promise.

About this time we received unexpectedly the visit of a functionary, whom I judged at the first glance to be a person of the greatest importance, by the marks of deference that the Director of Police and the Commandant of Spielberg showed him. We soon afterwards learned that he was his Excellency Count Sedlenitsky, brother of the Minister of Police of the Austrian empire. What was he come for? I was not long in ignorance; for he had scarcely bowed to me before the Director took the two or three little devotional books that had already been so often examined, and presented them, turning over each leaf, to the unknown, whose eye followed attentively this minute inspection.

"Your Excellency must be convinced that the orders of his Majesty are punctually executed," the Director of Police appeared to say; and Count Sedlenitsky, casting his eyes upon us and all the misery of our prison, seemed to reply, "His Majesty cannot be other than satisfied with your zeal."

Nevertheless I must do justice to the politeness that Count Sedlenitsky showed us on this occasion; and I am happy to say that he listened with great condescension to the complaints I made to him on the state of my eyes and the rigour of our imprisonment. If this visit confirmed us in the idea that the Emperor's severity was far from being relaxed, it gave us hopes at least that Maroncelli, in whose behalf the Minister's brother expressed a lively interest, might obtain, in consequence of his report, a more efficacious amelioration of his condition than merely being allowed a longer walk on the platform.

I know not whether I may attribute it to this beneficent influence that my complaints were listened to, but in the following June Wergrat conducted me into the presence of four medical men, three of whom were sent especially by the Emperor to give an account of the state of my eyes. These gentlemen examined me scrupulously, questioned me in French on the origin and progress of the disease, and gave me some encouragement, without however concealing that much more care was necessary.

I remarked that my disorder was caused by the rigid treatment to which we were subjected, by want of air, light and food, and by the privations of every kind we had to endure; concluding, that liberty alone could eradicate the evil, and save an organ, the loss of which would be more grievous than capital punishment.

The physician who had addressed me translated to his colleagues in a low voice all that I had said, and they then continued to consult in German, without having the slightest suspicion that I could understand them, repeating several times, "It is a serious matter, very serious; if this poor young man's imprisonment is at all prolonged, there will remain no remedy."

God knows the pang that seized my heart on hearing this dreadful sentence! "I recommend myself to you, gentlemen," said I on leaving them: "your report will decide on the preservation or loss of what is dearer to me than life."

Confalonieri, always kind and devoted, attempted for some time to lessen the effect that the words of the physicians had produced on my mind. "It is impossible," he then added, "but that this should make some impression upon the Emperor, and that it should cause him to hasten the moment of your liberation. Hope therefore; perhaps in a few months you will return to your country."

On the 1st of August, 1830, one Sunday after mass, at the moment at which our rations were brought to us, I heard in the corridor the step of the Director of Police, which the well-exercised ear of a prisoner alone could have enabled me to recognise.

"Here he comes again!" I whispered to Confalonieri. "Shall we not be exempted from the nuisance of his visits even on holidays?" And while uttering these words I hastened to secrete a needle, a nail with which I wrote on the wall, and two or three pins that served to keep my clothes together when they fell to shreds, or to prick a few words on paper when I wished to write to my companions.

Meanwhile the Director stopped at the registry; and nearly at the same time the sound of poor Maroncelli's crutches advanced slowly at the other end of the corridor. As he passed before our cell I heard Pellico's voice. A few minutes after my two friends came back: Maroncelli coughed, and murmured "Adieu!"

Their door had scarcely closed before that of Tonelli opened, and the prisoner was conducted into the presence of the Director of Police; when he returned we distinctly heard that he was not led back to his prison, but to that of Pellico. This circumstance made us suspect that something extraordinary was preparing, and our thoughts wandered in vague conjectures, when Caliban, while taking away our porringers, slipped a paper into my hand. We read with some difficulty these words pricked on it with a pin. "The Director has brought us the announcement of our pardon: this evening we quit Spielberg: our hearts are full of affliction at being obliged to leave you in bondage. But do not despair; we shall meet some day!"

"God be praised!" I exclaimed; "they are free. A few months longer and they would have ceased to live. What happiness to know that they are at liberty!"

But to this first burst of joy succeeded a feeling of sadness, inspired by the reflection that I was not included in the pardon, notwithstanding the report of the oculists. "It is all over then," said I to Confalonieri: "Heaven has decreed that I shall go blind, and die in prison. The Emperor, it is clear, intends to keep me here in Spielberg for years, and then.... But let us turn our thoughts to Pellico, worn out by suffering, and the mutilated Maroncelli. How many tears their poor mothers will shed on seeing them so disfigured by captivity!"

Thus speaking, I took a pin and began to trace a few words on a piece of brown paper, in the hope that Caliban might be able to deliver it to Pellico. I begged him and Maroncelli to inform my sister that we had known, loved, and sustained one another in the dungeons of Spielberg, and to assure her that I endured my trials with courage. Our faithful messenger got possession of this note, and remitted it faithfully.

Towards evening the Director of Police came again to fetch the pardoned. With an inexpressible feeling I listened to their steps along the corridor, until the fatal gate closed upon them. A pang then shot through my heart, and a flood of tears covered my cheeks, till sleep made me forget my troubles.

Pellico's deliverance, although a subject of joy to all, was also a loss, of which we daily felt the heaviness. Notwithstanding that during the last years our correspondence had almost entirely ceased, in consequence of the increased watchfulness of the authorities, still we had not been entirely prevented from now and then expressing our mutual sentiments by the interchange of a few words. We could also see each other at a distance every Sunday at chapel, and reciprocate some friendly sign; and when, on our return from mass, we were able to say that Pellico appeared to be less weak, we felt a consolation which we could better appreciate on the following Sunday, when he was no longer to be seen in his accustomed place.

One word from Silvio was a balm to our hearts when they were sinking under the weight of their grief. Indulgence, love, and charity were revealed by all his acts; and his patience was to us a most salutary exhortation to support without murmuring the misfortunes sent us by Providence. Esteemed and cherished by all his fellow-captives, he left behind him nothing but regrets and blessings. Only among women, and the best even of them, have I met with that tender piety, candour, unalterable kindness, and unlimited devotion which are his characteristics.

The visit of the oculists having failed to amend my fate, I now considered myself as entirely sacrificed. The pain of my eyes increased, and my health declined rapidly. A prey to the most gloomy anxiety, I one day complained bitterly to the ecclesiastic who had replaced the worthy Wrba. "The existence which is reserved for me is alarming," said I; "I should prefer death to the loss of my sight; and this misfortune will not fail to come upon me if I obtain no relief. I hoped that the Emperor would have had some pity for my miserable position; but I see too well that my eyes will, like Maroncelli's leg, only be ordered to be attended to when the evil is without a remedy."

Father Ziack tried to explain the delay by saying that perhaps the Emperor was ignorant of my state.

"No, sir," I replied, "he is well aware of it. All that relates to us is known to him most minutely: he receives daily reports concerning the most insignificant things. When a sparrow was driven by the cold weather to take refuge in the cell of one of our companions, an imperial decree was necessary in order that the poor bird, sent by Providence to cheer the prisoner, might be retained."

"But how do you know," he replied, "but that some great event in Europe may pre-occupy the Sovereign's mind? Your country is subject to so many shocks and so many revolutions."

"Has any change then taken place in France?" I inquired.

Father Ziack smiled; and, after a short pause, he added, "You Frenchmen have hot heads; you are never contented with those who govern: a mere nothing sets you in revolt."

My curiosity was at its height. "In short, what has happened?" I asked.

"Very serious events, and more than sufficient, I assure you, to turn the attention of the Emperor from his Spielberg prisoners. Pellico and Maroncelli have been fortunate!"

I pressed Father Ziack to say more, but without success. What could this event be?—what was taking place in France? This both Confalonieri and myself vainly endeavoured to conjecture, till, by adroitly questioning the keepers, we learned that a great revolution had broken out at Paris, and that already the militia was about being raised in the Austrian States. I leave it to be imagined what a swarm of suppositions this news raised in our minds. If we had before been kept in ignorance of ordinary events, it was natural that under such circumstances we should be subjected to increased vigilance. Therefore, the usual guards having been changed, all that we could make out from this gleam of intelligence was, that the Emperor must be extremely annoyed at what had happened.

The oculists having especially recommended me plenty of air, his Majesty ordered "a few more hours of platform for the prisoner Andryane;" and towards the end of the month of August I was permitted to have a longer walk, Sundays even not excepted. This favour unfortunately was not extended to poor Confalonieri.

At first I was too weak to feel the salutary effects of the measure. I went out, but against my inclination, because I was alone. After a few days, however, I began to derive pleasure and relief from inhaling the pure mountain air, and watching the passing of the clouds. Alas, what a change imprisonment has produced in me! The ideas, images, recollections, which, during the first years, would have crowded on my mind at the sight of the setting sun, or of the rich harvest withdrawn from the fields, were now scarcely to be recalled; and the grief this caused me was extreme. "Every feeling within me is becoming extinct," I said with bitterness; "the light of day and that of intellect will be taken from me at the same time, and I shall only remain, as Milton says, the prison of myself!" Then I sat down on the bench by the side of the chapel, from whence nothing could be seen, and hiding my face in my hands I wept over my troubles, till the sound of the clock, the flight of a swallow, or the rustling of the leaves changed the course of my ideas.

One Sunday, when I had prayed fervently, I was taken to the platform and left there alone. The sound of the organ and the psalms sung by the convicts fixed my attention; and the solemn chants to which I listened awakened in my soul the remembrance of a virtuous French family in which all was harmony,—where the mother, father, and two young daughters, uniting their voices, formed an enravishing concert. There was something so touching to me in this image of domestic happiness, that I took delight in recalling to mind the rare qualities of the parents, and the infantine, but even then charming features of the two inseparable sisters. One of these, the sweet little Adèle, with flaxen hair falling on her shoulders, charming blue eyes, and the pure expression of an angel, seized upon my thoughts, and I said, sighing, "She must be grown very beautiful now. Oh, that I could recall the time when I was caressing her for whole days! what a heavenly happiness I should experience with such a companion!" At the moment this wish was formed in my heart, I heard the choir singing in the chapel, "Our God is our hope!" And, full of emotion, I repeated, as if inspired by a divine presentiment, "God is our hope, and he will send his messenger to console his servants!"

In the mean time, in consequence of orders from Vienna, knitting and lint-making had become an intolerable labour, which the rudeness of the new Commandant rendered still more severe. In vain did we protest against our tasks: we were compelled to perform them under penalty of incurring the displeasure of the Emperor, or some fresh punishment. If we sought to induce our guards to tell us news of what was going on in Europe, they were replaced by Slavonian soldiers, who, to make all safe, could not speak one word of German. In short everything, even to the liberation of poor Caliban, united to make our situation more desponding than ever. Adding to the miseries of our prison the grief caused by the death of my father, and the distracting anxiety of my companion respecting his consort, an idea may be formed of our life during the winter of 1830—1831.

The uneasiness of Confalonieri was rendered still greater by some hints of the Director of Police, which confirmed the apprehensions he had already entertained about the health of his adored Countess, in consequence of the intelligence he had received at the period of the last attempt at escape. I did everything in my power to dispel the gloom of his mind by words of hope and consolation. He listened, and appeared touched by my tenderness; but he repeated, in a tone that pierced my heart, "I shall never see her again, my friend—I shall never see her again!" He then entreated me to leave him alone, that he might without restraint weep over her, to know whose fate he would willingly have sacrificed his life. All day and night I heard the exclamation of "Theresa, my beloved Theresa!" mingled with sighs and sobs.

Time, it is true, softened the agony of this poignant grief; for the irreparable loss he dreaded was not certain in the eyes of reason; and Divine goodness has permitted that man, in the presence of the most overwhelming disasters, should sometimes abandon himself to the salutary delusions of hope. Nevertheless Confalonieri soon became so weak that he could no longer leave his bed; and I too was seized with cramps in my stomach, which rendered me incapable of digesting anything.

CHAPTER XXVI.

I HAVE read in some German poet, that human life would be sadly wanting in charms, if we could not intermingle illusion and dreams with reality. What would he have said of our existence in Spielberg, of that endless agony, in which every thought, whether referring to the past, the present, or the future, could bring nothing but misery and desolation!

I had now no means left to counteract the evils that were heaped on me: I had been robbed of every resource and every hope that the heart and the head can suggest to a prisoner; and feeling overpowered, I fell into that apathy which unrelenting and irremediable adversity brings in its train. Such indeed was my discouragement and distress, that I should have been entirely broken down, had not my faith in God and in his divine promises, by turning my thoughts towards Heaven, taught me resignation. But how many regrets and struggles did I undergo before arriving at this salutary state of abnegation,—and how quickly would the slightest word or incident bring back my wishes to this world, which I imagined I had for ever renounced!

I will give a striking instance of this.

The guard who had for some time accompanied me to the platform was a Galician Pole. As we were left much alone I had many opportunities of judging of his goodness of heart, by his compassionate expressions, and the attentions he paid me during the walk. Although he spoke very little German, we had ended by understanding each other. I conversed with him respecting his country, the different campaigns he had made, the wounds he had received. He listened to me with pleasure, and little by little reserve gave way to confidence.

"Me much like French," said he one day: "they good soldiers, they good comrades with Poles."

" He paused, looked around to be certain that no one could overhear him, came nearer to me, and added, lowering his voice, "Poles beat Russians!"

"The Russians!" repeated I astonished.

"Yes, at Warsaw,—a revolution: Poles drive out Russians,—beat Russians!" and he clapped his hands, exclaiming, "Russians dead!"

"A revolution at Warsaw? when?"

"Some months; then, many battles; Russians all killed. Yesterday a courier brought the news. Everybody at Brünn talk about it,—everybody glad. I too not contain my joy, and tell you all."

After thanking him for his reliance on me, I questioned him anxiously about the Polish insurrection, France, and Italy; but the knowledge of the poor fellow was limited to what he had learned in the guardroom, and he could but ill satisfy my curiosity. He had however told me enough to excite my interest to the highest degree, and to throw me into a state of feverish agitation.

Day and night I only thought and dreamed of France or Poland fighting for their liberties; and reflecting on the fate of the brave men who were destined to die for the defence of their country, I felt a maddening grief at being forced to linger in my dungeon, while the favoured of Heaven were shedding their blood gloriously on the field of battle. Then feeling by this transport that devotion to the independence of nations still lived in my soul, and that I was ready to drag on twenty more years in captivity without complaining, provided Poland and Italy should become free, I experienced a sort of consolation and pride in having preserved my love for mankind in spite of all I had endured. The good Pole had piqued my curiosity in so lively a manner, that I interrogated him daily on what was passing in Europe; but he knew nothing, or next to nothing; and of this *next to nothing* I was soon deprived by his dismissal. Then all was silence and mystery, and I fell again into that apathy, from which I had been for a moment roused by this incident.

The spring and summer of 1831 brought to me only a succession of mental and bodily sufferings. My sight, stomach, and brain grew worse at the same time. "Another year or two of such a life," said I to Confalonieri, "and there will not be one prisoner left in Spielberg!"

My admirable friend, still weaker than myself, knew full well the truth of this presentiment; but he forgot his own sufferings to encourage me; and if his voice no longer carried hope to my heart, it at least brought back resignation. Then I offered up my grief to God, and entreated Him more fervently to grant me grace that in future I might only think of my salvation. And doubtless it was granted; for the certainty that I should soon end my days in Spielberg became less poignant as it penetrated into my heart. The estrangement from earthly things was more perfectly accomplished in me, and the interests of this world disappeared before the contemplation of eternity ever present to my mind.

This renunciation of the sweets of life, which was now the only theme of our meditations, could no longer form during those days of depression a subject of conversation. We knew all that passed in each other's mind; and, like the brothers imprisoned in Chillon, we felt that our dialogues insensibly grew cold. Melancholy and silent we passed our wearisome hours, Confalonieri confined by pain to his pallet, and I in going incessantly from the window to the door and from the door to the window, until my feet, bruised by the chains and my coarse shoes, forced me to suspend this fatiguing exercise.

Such was our wretched existence in the month of August, 1831, when another incident darkened still more our gloomy horizon. One day, on looking at the sentinels of the bastion, Confalonieri perceived that the grenadiers of the line had been replaced by militia. We concluded that events in Europe were taking a still more important turn: but what could these events be?

We endeavoured to make it out by questioning the keepers and the other officials; but they all preserved a strict silence. At last I addressed myself to Father Ziack, who, finding no other means of getting rid of my importunity, spoke after some hesitation of a *cordon sanitaire* which it had become necessary to establish on the frontiers of Poland and Transylvania, in order to protect the Austrian States from the cholera.

Although this did not appear to me a reason sufficient to explain the raising of the militia, which only takes place during a great war, yet I was not the less struck by the intelligence; and I asked, "What! are we menaced with that terrible scourge which commits such ravages in India?"

"It is feared so," he replied; "for the most rigorous measures, cordons, quarantines, etc. have not prevented it from penetrating into Hungary, where villages and towns have been depopulated."

"We are scarcely twenty-six leagues from the frontiers of Hungary; and consequently we may presume that Moravia will be soon invaded by cholera."

"This is doubtless to be dreaded, and therefore all necessary preparations are being made at Brünn."

"And is there any remedy for this frightful disease, whose name strikes terror into the whole population of India?"

"Re-assure yourself, my son: God may yet turn from us such a calamity."

"May His will be done! The cholera may be a scourge for the happy dwellers in the world; but for us children of adversity, it will only be, if it reaches us, a blessing of Providence."

Father Ziack, who perhaps reproached himself with having said too much, refrained from answering any further questions, from want of precise knowledge himself, as he assured me. But he promised that he would make us acquainted with all he should learn on the subject in due time.

The surprise of Confalonieri, when I informed him of what I had just heard, equalled my own. The possibility of cholera, though it did not alarm him any more than myself, became for the next few days the subject of our discourse. We endeavoured to remember the character of this pestilence, of which we had but a vague idea, and we also came to the conclusion that it might prove our deliverer.

Then we asked each other whether the Emperor would relax his severity; whether he would grant us more wholesome food, warmer clothes, longer walks; whether we might have an infirmary, etc. And we answered that humanity alone would make this his duty.

The following Sunday we told our companions what was going on, and we agreed with them to call in the physician of Spielberg, to speak to him respecting the cholera, and beg him to present a petition on the subject to the Governor. The Doctor, astonished that we were acquainted with the existence of the disease in Hungary, ended by acknowledging that several villages in Moravia were already infected.

"This is an additional reason," said we, "for you to beg his Excellency in our name to permit, first, that by a few lines we may be informed of the symptoms of the cholera and of the instant remedies to be applied; secondly, that in case of an attack our cells may be entered at night, and the necessary assistance given; thirdly, that we may have, like the other convicts, an infirmary where we may be taken care of by the usual nurses. "You must be aware," added I, "what cruelty there would be in allowing the prisoner who is seized with cholera to remain in the same dungeon with his companion who is yet free from it. It would be making sure that contagion, want of air and room should condemn both to certain death. We do not certainly cling much to life; but reason, and the belief we have in God, make it a duty to us to protect our existence, however miserable it may be. On this account we appeal to the humanity and religion of his Majesty, who cannot refuse under such circumstances to assimilate our fate to that of the ordinary convicts."

The physician promised to present our request to the Governor, and to use all his influence that it might be granted. But to make more certain, and in order that his Excellency might not pretend to be ignorant of our demand, we addressed the same petition to the Commandant of Spielberg and to the Director of Police. Thus it became necessary to listen to our application, and to set it forth in a report to the Emperor.

The month of September and part of October slipped away without our receiving any reply, though the cholera had shown itself in the suburbs of Brünn, and consternation was at its height among the inhabitants.

The local authorities redoubled their zeal, in order to diminish the intensity of the evil; and their solicitude extended even to the common convicts: new infirmaries were established, and Spielberg was abundantly provided with everything necessary to the treatment of persons attacked by cholera. No one was forgotten in the precautionary measures of the administration—no one except ourselves, who in vain protested against such neglect. The only answer we received was, "You depend on his Majesty: we have nothing to do with you."

This convinced us that we were destined to fall victims to the epidemic, that such was the end which awaited us after so much suffering. The expectation was awful; but instead of bringing despair to our souls, it produced, on the contrary, that calm resignation to the will of God, which those alone who expect on earth nothing but tribulation feel when about to leave this life.

Our friendship became, if possible, still more expansive, so that we experienced more and more the desire of expressing our mutual attachment; and when the anniversaries of Confalonieri's birth and marriage arrived, I could not resist the temptation of recording in verse my sentiments for him and his angelic Theresa. It was a homage paid to truth, a last cry of the heart, which was expected to die away within the walls of Spielberg: but I now feel happy and proud in being able to insert it here, as a testimony of my gratitude to the beneficent companion whom Providence gave me in misfortune.

A FRÉDÉRIC CONFALONIERI.

OCTOBRE 1831.

C'est donc en vain que d'un cœur ferme,
Luttant contre l'adversité,
Nous attendions enfin le terme
D'une longue captivité !
C'est donc en vain qu'avec constance,
Traînant une morne existence
Dans un cachot mystérieux,
Nous avions dit :—Peut-être encore
Reverrons-nous poindre l'aurore
Sur la terre de nos aïeux !

Hélas ! chaque jour plus à plaindre,
Vases comblés d'afflictions,
Nous vîmes tour à tour s'éteindre
Jeunesse, force, illusions !...
Et quel est notre seul présage
Après dix ans d'un esclavage
Pareil à la nuit des tombeaux ?
Oui..... quelle est l'unique lumière,
Qui, d'une grâce avant-courrière,
Annonce la fin de nos maux ?

C'est l'éclair qui sillonnant l'ombre
Montre l'abîme au lieu du port,
C'est la lueur, quand tout est sombre,
Qui s'élève aux champs de la mort;
C'est la prodigieuse attente
D'un mal qui porte l'épouvante
En tous les lieux, dans tous les cœurs;
D'un mal que le Gange a vu naître,
Et qui ne semble ici paraître,
Que pour couronner nos malheurs.

Eh bien!... Soumettons-nous sans plainte
A ce dernier coup du destin,
Lorsqu'au cœur la vie est atteinte
Pourrait-on en craindre la fin?...
Mais avant qu'un fléau funeste,
De mes jours menaçant le reste,
Rende mes esprits impuissans,
Je veux que mon âme sincère,
Au compagnon de ma misère,
Addresse ses derniers accens.

Comme à cette heure solennelle,
Où l'homme ne parle qu'à Dieu,
Entends ma voix, ami fidèle!....
—Peut-être, hélas! est-ce un adieu;—
Entends ma voix en ces journées
Qui marquent dans tes destinées
L'hymen, la naissance et l'amour,
Où tout jadis n'était que charmes,
Mais qui n'apportent plus que larmes,
Et douleur à chaque retour!

Sans causer un morne sourire
Pourrais-je encor former des vœux ?....
Parler d'espoir..... quand tout conspire
A rendre ton ciel ténébreux ?....
Ta douleur sombre et sans langage
N'est plus de celles qu'on soulage
Par l'aspect d'un vague horizon :
Tout lui manque..... Et ce doux dictame
Qu'une âme verse dans une âme
Pour elle se change en poison.

Alors !..... Alors qu'une parole,
Que nulle ne peut égaler,
Pénètre, ranime et console
Ceux que rien ne peut consoler !
Le cœur où pèse la disgrâce
Par elle sent fondre la glace
Dont le poids le faisait mourir ;
Par elle l'âme libre et neuve,
Plus forte enfin que son épreuve,
Dit à son Dieu.... je sais souffrir !

Lève donc avec assurance,
Lève tes regards abattus
Vers celui qui juge et compense
Maux et biens, fautes et vertus.
Ne sait-il pas que, né candide,
Toujours ton cœur a pris pour guide
La justice et la vérité ;
Et qu'ici-bas ta noble envie
Etait de signaler ta vie
Par des traces d'utilité ?....

N'a-t-il pas écrit sur ta page
— Dans ce livre où rien ne périt —
Chaque bien qui fut ton ouvrage,
Chaque œuvre dont tu fus l'esprit?....
Et l'œil qui se fraie une route
Jusque sous la plus sombre voûte
En daignant s'abaisser sur nous,
N'a-t-il pas vu des misérables
Aidés par les mains secourables
Du plus infortuné de tous?

Crois-tu qu'il ferme son oreille
A cet ange dont le soupir
Monte..... monte dans une veille
Que toi seul pourrait assoupir?
Crois-tu que tant d'autres prières,
Tant de pleurs sous d'autres paupières,
S'élèvent et coulent en vain?...
Et si ma lèvre ne l'implore,
Crois-tu pour cela qu'il ignore
Ce que pour toi nourrit mon sein?

Son qui frémit, mot qui s'élance,
Pour d'autres doivent retentir;
Mais lui..... c'est le Dieu du silence
Qui nous voit aimer et souffrir!...
Il n'a pas besoin pour m'entendre
Que d'un accent pieux et tendre
Ma voix, s'élevant jusqu'à lui,
Dise qu'en cet affreux orage
Tu fus ma planche de naufrage,
Mon sauveur, mon constant appui.

Il n'a pas besoin que ma bouche
Vous unissant... oh! noms chéris!
Quand votre souvenir me touche
L'invoque pour vous à grands cris!...
Non... non... il sait, couple que j'aime,
Couple dont l'infortune extrême
Me fair oublier mes malheurs,
Qu'après cette sœur de mon âme
Mon cœur attendri vous proclame
Les premiers de mes bienfaiteurs!

Dans les mains de ce divin juge,
En t'abandonnant tout entier,
Des jours passés, comme un refuge,
Ami..... remonte le sentier:
Tu retrouveras sur ses pentes
Des arbres, de fertiles plantes
Dont la tige porte ton nom,
Plus heureux que l'oisive race
Qui comme moi pour toute trace
Ne laisse que ronce ou limon.

Quoique dans cette triste enceinte
Des cœurs que la peine aigrissait
Trop souvent t'aient fait une absinthe
Du miel que ta main leur versait,
Belle, d'intentions si pures,
Que ton âme sur ses blessures
Sente pourtant quelques douceurs,
A la consolante pensée
Que Dieu ne l'a point délaissée
Puisqu'elle essuie encor des pleurs.

Helas! que plus que moi déplore
L'ombre où ton avenir languit!
Cependant que tes yeux encore
Osent en affronter la nuit:
Celui que le ciel a fait naître
Plein de ses dons..... et qui sait être
Comme toi, juste et bienfaisant,
Quel que soit son âge ou sa sphère
Saura toujours sur cette terre
Jeter des fleurs sur le présent.

Si pourtant... ô funeste doute!...
Tu succombais sous tes douleurs,
Si la mort... et qui la redoute
Quand seule elle tarit nos pleurs?...
Ce n'est pas toi, triste victime,
Dont le cœur ne sent et n'exprime
Qu'un seul regret, qu'un seul désir;
Toi, dont la mourante nature
Entendrait ce divin murmure:
Viens.... c'est au ciel qu'on doit s'unir!

Non, mon Dieu! non!.... La nuit s'éclaire,
Ton bras le tire du cercueil,
Sa prison s'ouvre..... un sort prospère
Compense ses longs jours de deuil.
Que ta clémence en soit bénie!
Et si tu dois trancher ma vie,
Qu'il dise, oubliant mes défauts:
Souvent il me parlait d'estime,
D'amour, de gratitude intime.....
Ah! ce cœur là n'était pas faux!

CHAPTER XXVII.

The cholera reached Brünn, and the funeral processions that we perceived from the platform succeeded each other without intermission. They became so frequent, that the death-bell ceased to toll, not to increase the alarm. Those who died were buried in silence; and the town, from whence no sound now reached us, appeared plunged in mourning and consternation.

One night we heard in the casemates close to us a confused noise of chains and voices, then groans and cries. An unfortunate convict was being carried to the infirmary. "The cholera is in Spielberg!" I remarked to Confalonieri: "and this is its first victim."

In the morning I found that I had not been mistaken. I sent for the Commandant and the Physician, and said to them, "The cholera is here, gentlemen; we are aware of it: we heard last night the screams of a wretch seized by the scourge. Have you received instructions relative to us? are we to have the infirmary we have asked for? If one of us should be attacked, may our prison be entered during the night?"

They replied that no order had arrived.

"Then it is impossible," I resumed, "that the Emperor has been made aware of it."

"The Governor has sent in a report to his Majesty," they answered; "of this we are certain."

"Pray return to his Excellency, gentlemen, and tell him that we only request to be taken to the hospital of the felons in case of illness, and that we appeal to his humanity."

The Commandant came back the same day to inform me that he had executed my commission, but that the Governor would not take upon himself so great a responsibility."

"Which means," I added, "that we have nothing more to hope from man, and that God alone can save us. Our situation is a cruel one; but we shall learn, I hope, to submit to it with resignation."

Our meeting on Sunday was melancholy and affecting. Who could answer for our seeing one another again? Castillia and Borsieri spoke of their parents and their families: the tears flowed from our eyes. We prayed fervently, and on parting we asked pardon of each other, as on a death-bed, for any involuntary offence we might have given.

On bodies so attenuated as ours the influence of the cholera could not fail to have an effect. Swimmings of the head, intestinal pains, unusual weakness, indicated too strongly, and were in our eyes certain signs that we should not escape the pestilence.

One night after the last visit, Confalonieri was seized with a fit of shivering and violent pain in the bowels. Other alarming symptoms soon appeared. It was a terrible moment to my heart! I knocked at the door to ask for assistance. The jailers refused at first to reply; and when at last, at my redoubled knocks, one of them came, he told me that the Commandant had the keys, and that no one could enter the prison till five o'clock in the morning. In vain I exclaimed in my anxiety that the case was urgent, and that my friend, if abandoned, might die for want of help. He merely repeated, "I can do nothing—I can do nothing; the Commandant has forbidden us to interrupt him."

I was so seized with indignation and despair, that I should have fallen into a fit of rage, and thrown myself against the door to destroy it, if the wretched appearance of Confalonieri, who was getting worse and worse, had not summoned all my thoughts to assist him. But what could I do in this state of absolute destitution of remedies and advice? His limbs became cold, and friction calmed neither the spasms nor the cramp. The small quantity of water in our possession was soon exhausted in quenching the thirst of the poor sufferer. Fortunately his courage, presence of mind, and self-abnegation seemed to increase as the symptoms became more alarming, and he continually repeated, "Do not make yourself miserable, my dear Alexander; I am in pain, but my strength lasts out. Perhaps this is not a real attack: God is good, he will have pity on us."

This confidence in the Divine mercy, this tranquillity of mind, were doubtless the occasion of his life being saved. After several hours passed in mortal agony, the crisis was over, the symptoms of cholera decreased, circulation was restored, and towards morning I had the inexpressible joy of seeing my poor friend breathe with ease, and out of danger. I then felt profoundly that one may, when unhappy and tired of life, consider death as a blessing; but that even then it is, in our eyes, the greatest of evils if it menace a person whom we cherish.

The physician, though we had not sent for him, hastened to us to learn the state of Confalonieri. After listening to us, he said that it was only an attack of cholerine.

"Which would have ended in cholera, and by the death of my friend," I remarked angrily, "if Providence had not watched over him. Is not leaving us during the whole night without medicines, assistance, and advice, the same as condemning us to death? Might not the Count have died before your visit? I ask, sir, whether the greatest felons have ever been treated with such barbarity?"

Fearing to be compromised, if he listened to my complaints, the physician wished me good morning, assuring me that it did not depend on him that it should be otherwise.

This was true. More than once yielding to the entreaties of Father Ziack, whose conduct in this instance was worthy of a good minister of the Gospel, he solicited the Governor to take upon himself the ordering us some relief. But his Excellency again would do nothing more than write to Vienna; and all that could be obtained from the Emperor was the permission, that such of us as were seized by cholera should be conveyed to some unoccupied cells, and there separately taken care of by the jailers.

The numerous cases of cholera that occurred among the convicts gave us reason to fear that we should not be spared. At the close of each day, when we separated for the night, we never failed to say, "Perhaps tomorrow we shall learn that some of our companions have ceased to exist: perhaps this is the last time we may speak to each other!" And we embraced like two affectionate brothers who are not to meet again except in the presence of God. We were nevertheless indifferent to life; and, entirely resigned, we awaited calmly for weeks and months the moment when the pestilence should number us among its victims.

In this manner we reached the month of February, 1832, when, thanks to the coldness of the season, the cholera began to decline. Freed from this restless agitation, which in some degree counteracted the monotony of my existence, I soon relapsed into my accustomed state of torpor; and more than once I regretted that Providence had not taken me from this world, in which only pain and sorrow were my lot. I felt therefore a sort of joy when, at the beginning of March, I heard towards evening the prolonged croak of a raven that had settled on the wall in front of my cell.

This appeared to my weak head an omen of death, which I received as the announcement of my deliverance. And when the same bird alighted on the ledge of my narrow window, and resumed his lugubrious cries, I no longer doubted that I was menaced by some new misfortune. But by degrees I began to think that this could not be the signal of the end of my existence, as that would be a benefit; and I ended by fearing the loss of some dear friend—of my own sister.

These gloomy forebodings, which I confided to Confalonieri, were increased by the continual presence of the raven. In vain I tried to frighten it by my voice or some other noise; it remained imperturbably either on the wall or the window, from morning to night, croaking mournfully as on a tomb. "It is a childish weakness," said I to my friend, "but I cannot help it; my soul is overwhelmed by a dread, such as we only experience on the eve of some catastrophe."

A few moments after the Director of Police made his appearance, and inspected our dungeons and persons more odiously than ever. Nothing escaped his search; but he found no irregularity. Meanwhile the raven continued croaking till the morning of the third day after this visit, when he pecked at the bars of the window, took flight, and left us. This was on the 13th of March, a Tuesday.

The sun, which had long been obscured, illuminated the horizon. One might have imagined that the fields and the town, purified by its glorious rays from the miasma of the cholera, had put on their spring garb to celebrate the termination of the terrible scourge. The air was soft; and on breathing it on the platform, I felt my bosom swell and my heart revive.

On returning to our cell, I looked on the window and the wall for the unpropitious bird, but he was no more to be seen or heard. That day we conversed a long time on those who were dear to us, repeating that their affection alone could attach us to life. Then, for the first time during several years, we recurred to the happiness we should experience in living near each other in France. But this discourse was soon interrupted by the melancholy reflection, that our future only consisted of two or three years more of torture, and a grave shared with felons.

Evening set in as we thus conversed: the chapel clock struck seven; and we were yet walking up and down our narrow cell, uttering from time to time a few words or a sentence, followed by a long silence. All at once Confalonieri said, that the iron gate of the corridor had been opened. I listened; but hearing nothing, I supposed that what he had taken to be the noise of bolts was only the clanking of our chains. "No," he added, "I am not mistaken; some one is advancing in the corridor."

I know not what ray of hope shot through my mind;—my heart beat violently.

"It is the Director of Police," I whispered to my friend. "At this unusual hour he can only be coming to set some of us free."

"May it please Heaven that he comes for you!" replied the Count, pressing my hand fervently.

This wish was scarcely expressed before M. Wergrat entered our dungeon, saying to me, "The Director of Police is waiting for you."

On hearing these words, I threw myself into the arms of Confalonieri, without having the power of speech; and he, the all-devoted, embraced me, exclaiming, "Son felice, son felice!" (I am happy, I am happy!)

"The Director is waiting for you," repeated Wergrat, drawing near to us; "come, sir."

I gave my final embrace to my friend, and holding his trembling hand in mine, I was at last able to mutter, "May God reward you for all the good you have done me!"

"Come, come!" cried Wergrat impatiently.

I tore myself from Confalonieri's arms; and when the door closed on him, I felt, from the pang that went through my soul, that there would be no happiness for me while my brother in misfortune, the saviour of my life, remained in bondage.

During the short passage from our cell to the room where the Director was waiting, Wergrat took me by the hand, and articulated in a mysterious manner a few words, of which I could not understand the meaning.

"He is there," said he, knocking at the door; "enter without fear, my dear sir."

The Director was standing near the same table where he had informed me of my poor father's death. On seeing me he exclaimed, "I am rejoiced, sincerely rejoiced, sir, to be able to give you good news." And bidding me approach, he resumed: "His Majesty, in consideration of your bad sight and bad health, has deigned to command that you should be conveyed to a place where you will be better off than at Spielberg."

I believed for a moment that he alluded to another prison, and that the Emperor's clemency was limited to this half-measure. But I knew too well the mystery with which the deliverance of state-prisoners was effected, not to understand that the Director, who was so unusually polite, had something more important to communicate to me. I began to thank him for the good tidings he had brought me, when he added, smiling, "It is a good sign; one favour leads to another. Now let us depart."

He called Wergrat, who was waiting in the corridor with several jailers, and desired me to follow him in silence. "Poor Confalonieri!" thought I, as I passed for the last time before the door of our cell, "he is there listening!" and my heart was ready to break. Hearing the clank of Castillia and Borsieri's fetters, I struck mine forcibly together, to bid adieu to my friends.

"Hush, hush!" murmured Wergrat: "no noise!"

On arriving at the iron gate of the corridor, I stopped to look back on those dungeons which I never expected to leave, unless to rejoin Oroboni and Villa. Then continuing our march, we crossed the great court, and came to the workshop of the smith, whom the Director of Police ordered to take off my chains. In a few minutes I was freed from the irons which I had worn nearly nine years. After the operation the smith looked at me smiling, and added with an air of satisfaction, "I always told Schiller that I should have the pleasure of striking them off. Adieu, Mr. Frenchman—me very delighted!"

I seized his hand, repeating several times my thanks. While this was going on, the Director of Police attended to the formalities necessary to my liberation, and to the restitution of the money and other objects of value of which I had been deprived on my arrival at Spielberg.

Almost insensible to the certain indications of approaching liberty, I looked with indifference on all that was passing around me. The exchange of my tattered dress of a convict for the clothes I received caused me no sensation of pleasure; and when the Director called for the carriage which was to convey me to Brünn, I showed no anxiety to enter it. Wergrat, who was in fact a good kind of man, in spite of his excess of zeal, assisted me to the steps, and said with emotion, "I wish you much happiness!" And pressing my hand in his own, with the other he wiped away a tear from his eyes.

We then set out at a quick pace, escorted by soldiers carrying lanterns, and thus crossed the courts, the bastions and the outer gates, which opened before us, creaking on their hinges. Alas, how much must I have suffered, to have now passed through them without any feeling of joy!

I turned back, to see once more the melancholy abode in which I left the friend whom God in his mercy had bestowed on me in my days of misfortune; but it was too dark for me to distinguish anything; and the Director, addressing me for the first time, remarked that the cold was piercing, and that I had better shut the window.

I then ventured several questions upon my family, and the state of France, to which he replied so abruptly that I began to believe I was only going to change prisons, as he had announced to me at first. At length we reached the foot of the hill, entered the town, and alighted at the General Police-office.

The Director now sent away his people, closed the door, seated himself gravely at his desk, and said to me with a gracious air, "There is good news for you—very good news; you will be well pleased." And taking a despatch, which a courier from Vienna had brought that morning to his Excellency the Governor, he read as follows:—

"The Governor of Moravia will immediately set at liberty the prisoner Alexander Andryane, whom I restore to his sister. She will receive him at Schœrding, where she will wait for him."

At the name of my sister, of my second mother, I felt so much emotion that I could not utter one word of thanks. When I recovered sufficient strength I asked, "Is then my sister at Vienna?"

"Yes, certainly," he answered; "with one of your relatives. It is she who has solicited and obtained your pardon."

"She! O my God, I thank thee!" and I wept.

The emotion and joy that I had not before felt unfroze my heart; tears flowed, sweet and salutary as in the days of happiness, and I blessed my sister from the bottom of my heart.

"Something yet remains to be communicated," said the Director; "it is a promise you are to sign not to enter again the states of his Majesty without his express permission, and under the penalty of ten years' imprisonment."

I leave it to be guessed whether I did not hasten to sign such an engagement.

"Now that you know all, and that you have recovered a little from your emotion," he continued, "I will conduct you to your apartment."

He took a light, and I followed him across several chambers, the furniture of which appeared to me—the poor inhabitant of a dungeon—magnificent. We then came to a narrow passage facing a door studded with iron bars and bolts.

"I am very sorry," said he, "not to be able to accommodate you better; but I have only this room vacant."

The jailer who made his appearance hastened to open the door, and I entered the strong-room of the Police.

"You may ask for anything you wish for," added the Director; "but I was near forgetting,—here is a letter from your sister."

This was quite sufficient to efface the painful impression that I experienced in finding myself again under bolt and bar. I took the letter with transport, and was hastening to read it in order to return it to the Director, when he told me that I might keep and peruse it at my leisure.

"Then," observed the jailer, "it will be necessary to leave a light with the prisoner?"

"Certainly," replied his superior, "till ten o'clock." Then turning to me, he wished me good night, and went away, followed by the keeper.

I remained with my letter, my precious letter! I read it, pausing at every line to give vent to my emotion. My sister informed me that she had arrived at Vienna with her cousin Berthelin, the good, devoted friend of her whole life; that my brother and niece were well, and that she would wait for me on the frontier.

It was too much happiness after my long-suffering, and I should have been unable to sustain it, had it not been for the thanks I addressed to God with my whole soul. Then I read over twenty times each page of this touching communication, which concluded with these words: "When you are united to us at Schœrding, you will learn all we have done to obtain your release, and how God has blessed our holy undertaking."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

It is impossible to conceive my anxiety to hear the details of what my family had done and suffered in order to procure my liberation. Of this I afterwards found an interesting account in my sister's Journal, from which I shall again give some extracts, as a touching testimony of ten years' perseverance and devotion.

"*Paris, February 8th,* 1832.—Seven years have elapsed since I terminated the fruitless journey which I made to Milan to obtain the pardon of my brother. Ready to depart for Vienna, where I am going to endeavour to soften the Emperor, by reminding him of the promise he then made me, before I commence the detailed recital of the happiness or the misery which I shall experience in this attempt, I will relate here all that I have learned of his fate since the end of 1829, when discouragement caused me to discontinue writing.

"The year 1830 did not offer us any chance of putting an end to his captivity. The spring had at first been fixed upon for my husband and myself to repair to Vienna, as the Prince de Montmorency-Laval had recommended; but the marriage of my daughter detained us at Paris. The revolution of July then intervened, and made us regret that it broke out exactly at the moment we had chosen for our departure. Doubtless it promised us support and sympathy on the part of the new Government; but at the same time it irritated the Emperor and prohibited all attempts with him.

"The month of September in this year we suffered a new affliction. The Countess Confalonieri was taken away from the admiration of all who knew her: she had drank to the dregs the cup of grief. Her trials were now ended. It pleased God to give her the reward of them, by calling her to Heaven after a long and painful illness, during which she preserved all her faculties, and felt each day her heart tortured at the thought that she was leaving in the depths of misery an idolized husband, who would lose with her all hope of happy days on earth. Poor Theresa! angelic woman! for whom I shall mourn all my life, whom I shall venerate from the bottom of my soul as a holy martyr to conjugal devotion, how many bitter tears have you cost me! Dying in the arms of a brother, whom she tenderly loved, she bequeathed to him all the hopes that she still cherished, notwithstanding so many fatal deceptions; and trusting in a future period when her letters might reach Spielberg, she had the courage to write several, which, dated in advance and following each other at a considerable distance, might conceal from the Count for some time the irreparable loss which he had sustained:—a constant source of consolation to him during her life, she wished still to afford him comfort after her death.

"Nothing having resulted from all our efforts for our poor prisoner, we were compelled to recommence on a new plan. In the month of October I saw General Lafayette, then commanding the National Guard of France. He had already made the most obliging promises to my husband; and he now received me with paternal kindness, saying that this affair interested him personally; that having been himself a prisoner of Austria at Olmütz, he felt it his duty to do all in his power to put an end to so great a misfortune. It was about this time, and during the winter which followed, that my husband and myself several times and alternately had the good fortune to see the Queen in private audiences, in which she was the perfection of graciousness, and undertook to write to the Emperor, who is her brother-in-law.

" In the month of February, 1831, I received a note from the Austrian Ambassador, informing me, at the request of Prince Metternich, that the eyes of the prisoner were growing weaker and weaker, and his constitution was affected. Count d'Appony confirmed these sad details, reading to me himself a letter from his Highness, who recommended him to announce this intelligence to me with all possible caution.

" On the 14th of February in this same year I received from Silvio Pellico, whom I thought still a prisoner at Spielberg, the letter which I here transcribe:—

" ' Madam,

" ' Companion in misfortune of your poor Alexander, I had not his company the day I quitted Spielberg, but I saw him the same morning that my pardon was announced to me: this was the first of August, 1830. All communication between us was forbidden; I only met him on Sunday at mass, without being able to speak to him. Yet, madam, in the course of so many years of mutual sorrows, our hearts often found means of expressing to each other how much we suffered. He has often desired me, if I were liberated before him, to convey news of him to his family, to his beloved sister. He was in good health on the first of August, and his countenance, although sad, showed courage and resignation. If you should happen to hear good news of Alexander, I conjure you by the affection which united me to him, to favour me with the intelligence by some private hand.

SILVIO PELLICO.'

"A few days after, a man still young, and so cruelly maimed that he could only support himself with the aid of crutches, presented himself at our house, saying that he was the bearer of news of my brother the prisoner. At these words all the doors were open to him; but what was our grief on hearing that he had been a captive with Silvio Pellico for nine years, and had recovered his liberty at the same time with him! The unfortunate man had lost his right leg in consequence of the intolerable discipline of the prison.

"I will not attempt to describe here all the horrors of the recital of Maroncelli, neither the excess of their suffering, nor the pain it gave us. * * * * To know that our poor Alexander was deprived of every mental and physical alleviation, loaded with irons, without a book or any means of employment, and without news of his family! How many illusions were destroyed by this cruel account! I had flattered myself, notwithstanding all the Countess Confalonieri had told me, that their treatment was not so horrible as I now learned it to be. I remained as if thunderstruck, and all that his fellow-prisoner told me of the courage of Alexander, of his mildness and resignation, failed to re-animate me.

"From this time Maroncelli became to me a brother, a friend; I did everything in my power to ameliorate his condition, to make up by my cares and attention for a family and a country. My husband presented him to the King, who took great interest in him. A short time after I wished very much that he should meet the Duke of Orleans, in order that he might give the young prince a just idea of their sufferings at Spielberg, and by that means to increase his solicitude in behalf of my brother. The Duke of Orleans, not granting audience to females, desired me to meet him at General Lafayette's on a certain day and hour. He was exact to his appointment, and appeared to be much moved at the sight of Maroncelli, when I presented him—a living proof of the barbarous treatment of the prisoners at Spielberg. We conversed a long time with the Prince in the closet of the General. I ventured to tell him that the fate of my brother entirely depended upon the steps which the King might take with the Emperor; that I had every reason to believe a letter written by the King, requesting the discharge of the prisoner, would immediately open the gates of Spielberg; that, from the noble heart of the Duke of Orleans, I trusted to obtain this much-desired letter from the King.

"The Prince coloured, and answered me with emotion: 'I was not prepared, madam, for the request which you have made, and am consequently not aware whether my father will grant me the letter; but I promise you to use all my interest to that effect.' And on hearing the tone of his voice, and seeing the tear in his eyes, it was impossible to doubt it.

"Having learned that the King could not yield to the solicitation of the Duke of Orleans, but that the Queen had just written the most pressing letter to the Emperor, I felt the necessity of expressing my gratitude to her. She received me with that kindness which touches the heart, and would make her the model of women, as she is of wives and mothers, even if Providence had not placed her in so exalted a station.

"We had expected six months the result of this precious letter, when the newspapers announced under the head of Vienna, in the early part of the last month, that the Emperor would complete the fortieth year of his reign on the first of the coming March; and that this happy anniversary would be celebrated throughout the empire by brilliant fêtes, and above all by many promotions and favours granted by the Sovereign. We hoped that his Majesty awaited this period to give liberty to the prisoners of state.

"With such thoughts, everything is possible, and everything ought to be tried. But my husband, detained at Paris for the interest of his brother in an important law-suit, which must not be postponed and which requires all his attention, cannot go to Vienna. Under these circumstances I requested the assistance of a relative who has been my friend through life. My cousin Berthelin, a second father to me, and also the agent of my brother, will accompany me to Vienna. We shall set out in three days, in order to arrive at the end of our journey before the first of March.

"I have been to bid farewell to the Prince de Laval, who has recommended me more strongly than ever to appeal only to the Emperor's heart, and to put aside all diplomacy. Notwithstanding this advice, which the experience of the Prince renders important, I have sought to gain the mediation of the Empress. I take with me the most pressing letter from her sister, the Duchess of Leuchtenberg, widow of Eugene Beauharnois, at this moment in Paris. The Princess of Wagram, who was always so kind to me, has also given me letters for her Majesty: she speaks of Alexander as would the most affectionate sister, and of myself as a friend who is dear to her.

"*February* 10*th*, 1832.—I have this morning seen the Queen, who received me well, saying with tears in her eyes that her good wishes accompanied me. We leave tomorrow, in a little travelling-carriage in which there is only room for two: everything is ready. May Heaven bless this enterprise! I leave my family with a sorrowful heart: my mind is gloomy, for I have scarcely a glimmer of hope. Whatever happens, we shall have fulfilled a great duty, and this thought would give courage to the weakest.

"*Vienna, Thursday, February* 23*rd*.—At last we have arrived at the end of our long journey. Alas! shall we find here the termination of our long sufferings?

Scarcely arrived, we were cruelly disappointed by the positive assurance that the Emperor had changed his mind, and that there would neither be fêtes nor favours granted on the first of March. My cousin has himself taken to the French Embassy all the letters which I have brought from my family and friends for Marshal Maison.

"*Friday, February* 24*th.*—From this time it is necessary to begin to act. I have commenced the day with writing at length to Prince Metternich, requesting an early interview. I had just finished the letter, when Marshal Maison called. I was alone; he pressed us much to come and live at the Embassy, saying that we should have apartments to ourselves, in which we should be quite free. I thanked him for his polite offer, but declined it. After we had conversed some time on the subject of the great affair which is the object of my journey, he added, 'I am now going to Prince Metternich, and will ask leave to present you to him.'

"'Will you have the goodness, M. le Maréchal,' I said, 'to give him a letter, which I have written this morning?'

"He promised me this, and took his leave, making an appointment at the Embassy for three o'clock: that is the time when I shall be able to see his lady.

"*Wednesday, February* 29*th.*—A few minutes before ten I got into a carriage, trembling so much that I could scarcely support myself. I was not intimidated at the thought of seeing a Sovereign, but much affected at having at last reached the decisive moment. My poor cousin had scarcely strength to speak to me; he went out at the same time as myself, to try to compose his mind by visiting the Church of St. Stephano.

"Arrived in a short time at the Burg (the imperial palace), I ascended to the third story by a wooden staircase: there it is that the Sovereign of so many different peoples lives. An usher looked at my letter, then sought for my name in a list, and requested to me to enter. I was shown into a spacious gallery, in the centre of which was the imperial throne; many persons were waiting,—all standing, even the females, from respect to the place. My emotion was so great that it did not permit the observance of etiquette, for my trembling limbs would no longer support me; and I seated myself close to the Emperor's closet at the extremity of the gallery, at the door of which was an Hungarian nobleman on guard, with his sword drawn.

"Ten o'clock was striking at the moment the door opened, and the signal was given for me to advance. The apartment was so small, that on entering I found myself close to the Emperor, who was standing, dressed in the uniform of an Austrian general, and his breast covered with orders. I bowed low, and began my petition, when he interrupted me at the first word, saying, 'I have acted foolishly, very foolishly.' And his Majesty, seeing that I looked surprized, hastened to add: 'If I consent some day to set your brother at liberty, I ought not to have let him been placed with Confalonieri; he knows all his secrets and may divulge them.'

"'Ah, sire, he has suffered so much and so long! In the name of the Divine mercy, listen to the impulse of your heart; recollect those words uttered by your

Majesty seven years ago,—'I will restore him to you some day, I promise you.' They have been the consolation of a family much to be commiserated. Sire, do not reject my supplication—pardon, pardon him!' And I threw myself on my knees, shedding tears.

"'Rise, rise, madam!' he said kindly, and extending his hand to assist me. 'And what will my Italian subjects say with respect to the other state-prisoners, who deserve pardon more than your brother? He has a great veneration for Confalonieri, to whom, I know, he is devotedly attached.

"'Sire, how could it be otherwise, with men who have suffered so much together?'

"'Without doubt, without doubt; I do not consider it a crime; and it is very certain that if one of the two deserved to be hanged it was not your brother. I have much ameliorated their condition: I have acceded to the supplication of the Countess Confalonieri that her husband should have coffee, which was necessary for his health. If I release your brother—'

"'Ah, sire,' cried I, clasping my hands, 'will you really then restore him to us?'

"'Then,' replied the Emperor smiling, 'will you promise me to observe the strictest silence—to say that I have not granted your prayer? Answer me,—that you will not even write to France?'

"'Sire, the orders of your Majesty shall be strictly obeyed. I promise to refrain from expressing my gratitude and joy. But your Majesty will permit me to write to my family, enjoining at the same time the most profound secrecy.'

" 'Yes, I consent to it, but to your family only; for, do you see, I do not wish to be tormented by my Italian subjects. Well, madam, I yield to your entreaties.'

" 'May Heaven bless your Majesty, and—'

" The words died away on my lips, I could not utter another word.

" 'Calm yourself, calm yourself,' said the Emperor. 'You will wait for him on the frontier; is it not so? I shall give orders to Metternich; he will inform you what you will have to do; but it will take some days, because we must provide him with warm clothes.'

" After having showered a thousand blessings on the Emperor, I took leave of him; he nodded his head kindly, and added, 'If you desire, madam, to see me once more previous to your departure, I will receive you with pleasure.'

" 'Your Majesty confers an honour on me which I did not dare to hope.'

" And, light as a bird which has regained its liberty, I hastened to Prince Metternich. I waited not an instant, but on entering his closet I cried, 'Ah! sir, how happy I am!'

" He pressed my hand affectionately and said, 'I had no doubt of the result, although the Emperor did not confide his intention to me; but when he heard of your arrival from me, he answered, "I am glad that the good woman has come, for I only wish to yield to an application from the family, and shall be glad at the same time to please Queen Amelia." But,' added the Prince, 'let us now arrange what had better be done. Seat yourself there,' and he handed me to a place at the little table. 'Tell me first what you said to his Majesty.'

"I began the recital, and when I came to the permission to write to France, to my family, the Prince interrupted me saying, 'I am going to send a courier this evening to Count d'Appony; send me your letters, and I will forward them.'

"'May I also, sir, give you one for the prisoner? Could you not send it to Spielberg?'

"'Yes, I promise it you.'

"When I had finished my story, Prince Metternich was enthusiastic in praise of the Emperor's goodness. He then added, 'In order punctually to execute the commands of his Majesty, you must not depart under your own name, for it has been spread by all the newspapers in the south of Germany, where the liberty of the press is tolerated. You know that the established custom compels you to sign a register wherever you change horses and at the entrance of all towns: thus in an instant your arrival will be known; the people would interest themselves for your brother as a so-called victim of despotism—you would be serenaded—you would receive a deputation to invite you to a public entertainment, which you could not refuse, and there they would make you drink a toast to the death of the Emperor.'

"I could not refrain from a movement of indignation, and I said forcibly, 'Good God! sir, do you think me capable of such—'

"'Certainly not,' answered the Prince; 'it is precisely because I know the horror you would feel, that I wish you to avoid it. So, give me the name of the relation who accompanies you.' And he wrote it with a pencil. 'It is well; he shall be your husband, and your passports shall be in the name of Monsieur and Madame Berthelin; M. Andryane shall be M. Berthelin's brother. I will get your passports *viséed* under these names at the different legations, and will send them to you when ready to leave. I am going to receive his Majesty's commands. If you will call again the day after tomorrow I shall doubtless be able to give you some information. Come also whenever you wish; my door will always be open to you.'

"I longed to quit the Prince, to hasten to my excellent friend, whose anguish I knew. An hour had elapsed since I left him. The noise of my carriage had informed him of my return. I expected to find him on the staircase, but his anxiety nailed him to his room: he could not move a step to know our fate the sooner. I rushed towards him, and falling into his arms I cried, 'We have him! he is restored to us!'

"His tears and sobs were his only answer: the excess of our joy manifested itself in exclamations and broken sentences. My good cousin, moved to the bottom of his soul, wished to write to his wife and son, but his emotion would not permit him to hold a pen; he could only trace a few scarcely legible words. Was I then less transported with joy since I wrote to all my relations at Paris, and a letter of four pages to the poor prisoner? I went afterwards to take these despatches to Prince Metternich, who sent them away in my presence. The rest of the day was spent in happiness: it was enjoyment so much above our strength that communion with God was necessary to calm ourselves.

"Oh may the 29th of February, 1832, be for ever blessed,—may it be a day of eternal acts of grace, and of unmingled happiness!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

"*Thursday, March 1st.*—After a sleepless night, I felt a desire to return thanks to God,—to find myself alone with him in His temple: I had not been able to do so previously from excessive agitation. Oh, how I poured forth thanksgivings, with the fervour of a deeply-grateful heart! The tears that I shed relieved me, as I listened to the priests who were singing after the mass, German hymns, in harmony which filled my soul with the most holy feelings. Returned home, I did not again go out, for I was exhausted.

"*Friday, March 2nd.*—I have seen Prince Metternich, who cannot yet fix the period of our re-union, so much desired, because the Emperor, having himself given all the commands relative to our affairs, instead of directing his Highness to do it, the conclusion will be delayed; besides the pardon must be legally ratified, which may occupy eight or ten days. We must endeavour to be calm and to feel only the extent of our happiness. But a new cause of anxiety has arisen: the Marshal, with whom I dined today, has informed me that a few hours after my audience important news was brought, which had much irritated the Emperor and Prince Metternich. The French have entered Ancona, and occupied it. The Marshal is uneasy at the delays which his Highness has announced to me, and fears that the Emperor may retract his promise in consequence of his dissatisfaction with France. There are moments when I feel very anxious, but I regain confidence in reflecting that the word of a sovereign is sacred. Yet how fortunate that this news of the occupation of Ancona only arrived the evening of my audience. A few hours sooner, and I should have obtained nothing!

"*Friday, March* 9*th.*—We seek to shorten the days by visiting Schœnbrunn, Luxemburg, and all the environs of Vienna, and by examining all that is interesting in these places; but the time does not pass away more quickly. I often go to Prince Metternich in search of consolation. I was successful this morning, for he has assured me that we shall shortly be able to quit Vienna, and that we may make every preparation for our departure. The Emperor has told him that the formalities are fulfilled, that Alexander has been separated from the prisoners, provided with new clothes, and has set out on his journey. Ah, my God, grant that these words of comfort may be those of truth! I need it much, for the Marshal distracts me by all that he makes me dread. Every day sees a quarrel between him and Prince Metternich relative to the occupation of Ancona.

"*Sunday, March* 11*th.*—We continue our excursions, during which we meet almost every day some of the members of the imperial family, in a private carriage without escort, or on foot without any suite. The Emperor and Empress lead a very retired life. It is the same with the King of Hungary, heir to the imperial throne. This poor prince is constantly sad and timid, in consequence of ill-health. He is seen at the Prater with his wife, who never leaves him; both walking in silence in the solitary alleys, followed by one servant, appearing so unhappy that they inspire the deepest pity.

"*Monday, March* 12*th.*—We went this morning to the Prater; the weather was very gloomy. We had arrived, talking of our prisoner, at the end of the promenade, which was quite deserted, when we perceived the young Duke de Reichstadt, on horseback, attended as usual by an old General and a servant. I had long desired to see him. The Prater being deserted in this place, it was easy to stop close to the Prince without being remarked. We were leaning against a tree when he passed by us: we both made him a low bow, which he returned with great quickness; taking off his hat and looking towards us, he cast his eyes on the red riband of the Legion of Honour which my cousin wore at his button-hole. His head being uncovered, his forehead and his quick sparkling look gave him such a likeness to Napoleon that I could not refrain from saying aloud, 'How he resembles his father!' He started with surprise on hearing these words, and looking at me with an air of interest, he slackened his pace, turning towards us as long as we were in sight. My heart beat violently; I did not think myself susceptible of such emotion. It made me understand all the enthusiasm for an unfortunate and dethroned monarch. Poor youth, what will be his fate!

"We dined at our Ambassador's, and accompanied him to the Opera, where I saw a pantomime, which much amused me. I spoke to the Marshal of the impression which young Napoleon made on me; and whilst talking during the opera, which was detestable, the following is what I have been able to gather respecting him. The Duke de Reichstadt is eager to see every one who can speak to him of his father. He met the Duke de Ragusa some months since, and begged him, with the Emperor's consent, to come and pass two hours every morning at the Burg, to explain the campaigns of his father, of which he has read all the particulars. During three months the Duke de Ragusa went every morning to the imperial palace; and when he left Vienna, he received the portrait of the young Prince, with this inscription: 'To the Duke de Ragusa, the companion in glory of my father—a grateful son.'

"The revolution of July raised in his heart great hopes; but, as they gradually vanish, his spirits give way to despondency. On the marriage of the King of Hungary, eighteen months since, there was a grand entertainment at Court; the table at which the Emperor, Empress, and Archdukes dined was in the imperial riding-school, whilst the great dignitaries were in a raised balcony. The Duke de Reichstadt, who had not the right of being seated at the family table, was walking about sadly, when a lady said to him, 'Your Highness must enjoy this; it is a triumph for you.' 'Say rather a shame, madam,' he replied; 'but it will come to an end, I hope.'

"The first time that he met Marshal Maison was at a ball. He avoided dancing, in order that he might get beside him, and said, accosting him, 'You were the companion in arms and in glory of my father, pray tell me what is your opinion of his Russian campaign?' 'I cannot answer so grave a question here, my Lord;' and the Marshal left him. Yet the poor young man was not angry, for at the time of the appearance of the cholera, when the Court and the Ambassadors went to stop at Schœnbrunn, the Marshal had a fit of the gout which kept him for six weeks confined to his room, and during the whole of that time the Prince sent twice a day to inquire after his health—simply because he was a Frenchman. The Duke de Reichstadt appears to feel deeply his position, and, seeking to emulate his father as far as it is in his power, he exercises at all hours of the day and in all weathers the regiment which he commands.

"*Thursday, March* 15*th.*—I was alone this morning at two o'clock, when a secretary from Prince Metternich came to bring me the following letter, written as usual by himself:—

"'I hasten, madam, to send you the annexed details relative to the manner in which the Emperor's commands have been executed with respect to your brother. You will see by these extracts from the official report, that M. Andryane will be at Schœrding, on Tuesday, March 20th. I recommend you, therefore, to start on Saturday; you will reach Schœrding before him. I will ask his Majesty's commands relative to your audience; and the moment I receive them I shall have the honour of informing you of his decision. Accept, madam, the assurance of my respect.

METTERNICH.'

'March 15, 1832.'

"To this letter was annexed a copy of a Report addressed to the Minister of Police, from the Director-General of the Police of Moravia. Prince Metternich was kind enough to send it to me translated into French.

"I had not recovered from the sensation caused by this happy news, when a note from the lady-in-waiting to the Empress informed me that her Majesty, having received the letters I had brought from their Highnesses the Duchess of Leuchtenberg and the Princess of Wagram, wishes to see me tomorrow.

"I hastened to Prince Metternich, to thank him for his kind communication, and to inquire the time of our departure. He repeated to me that Alexander will leave Brünn on the 17th, accompanied by a Commissary of Police; that therefore we must start the day after tomorrow, to be at the frontier of Schœrding on the 18th, where my brother will arrive on the 20th. We shall be obliged to remain three days in quarantine, in consequence of the cholera, which is still raging in Austria. The Prince told me that his Majesty will receive me tomorrow, at ten o'clock.

"*Friday, March 16th.*—I was presented this morning to the Emperor. I crossed the throne-room, the closet where I was received at my former audience, and then waited in a large antechamber, furnished with cabinets of walnut-tree, in which some valets were placing white porcelain cups, which appeared to have been used at his Majesty's breakfast. After remaining a quarter of an hour, I was introduced to the Emperor, in an apartment the plainest that can be imagined. I found him alone, dressed in a blue coat and trowsers, without any order. I assured his Majesty that I had strictly obeyed his commands, that I only knew two persons at Vienna, and had told them both that he had refused me the pardon of my brother.'

"'It is well, very well,' he replied; 'I am satisfied.'

"I expressed my gratitude to him, and, I trust, in a tone which would convince him how much I felt. He dismissed me, saying, 'Adieu, madam,—be happy!' And he accompanied these words with a low bow.

"I then went, according to her appointment, to wait upon the Empress: she occupies the second floor; her staircase is the same as the Emperor's. A Hungarian guard was stationed at the entrance. I crossed two saloons, quite deserted, ornamented with taste and beautifully furnished,—not with the simplicity of the Emperor's apartments, but an elegance well understood. On reaching the third room, I at last perceived a living creature: it was a chamberlain, who, sword in hand and his hat under his arm, opened a door, and requested me to enter.

"I expected that I was going to follow him, and cross at least a gallery before reaching the Empress. But great was my surprise when I saw her standing in the middle of the room, the lady-in-waiting a few steps behind her. She was in full dress,—a bonnet of red velvet, with white feathers, a figured white satin dress, trimmed with blonde, her neck and arms uncovered, pearls and diamonds. I advanced, after having saluted her with great respect. She took me by the hand, saying in a sweet voice, which touched my heart, 'I am glad to see you, madam: I know that my cousin has much regard for you; she informs me that you are intimately acquainted; and I am doubly delighted to see you under circumstances which must make you so happy.'

"I spoke to her of my gratitude to the Emperor. She again pressed my hand, saying, 'Is it not so? how good he is!' And her accent evinced the greatest affection for him. She questioned me a good deal about the Princess of Wagram and her children. 'Is Lina happy with her husband? and the little Anna, so exquisitely pretty, is she all that she promised to be? The poor Countess Confalonieri has not been called to the same happiness as yourself! I had a great friendship for her: I pitied her much, and deeply regret her.'

"'Ah, madam, how much she felt all that she owed your Majesty!' And seeing an expression of sadness steal over her countenance, I dared not speak to her of the benevolence of which she gave so many proofs nine years ago.

"The Empress is not handsome; she is forty-two years of age; but her countenance expresses so much sensibility and sweetness that one feels inclined to consider her beautiful. I left her, after about twenty minutes' conversation, much pleased at the kindness of my reception, and sad at the same time at the thought that I should never see her again.

"I then went to take leave of Prince Metternich. His Grace frequently repeated to me, 'For the sake of the prisoners who remain at Spielberg, prevent the French newspapers and Chamber from occupying themselves about them. Let no steps be taken, especially for Confalonieri, for he will be confined ten years longer, solely because the Emperor will not suffer other nations to interfere with what he does in his own dominions.'

"*Schœrding, Sunday, March* 18*th.*—It is here then that he will be given up to us,—here that we shall see him in two days! I scarcely dare think of it. We quitted Vienna yesterday morning at nine o'clock. After resting an hour at Moëlk we continued our journey, travelling all night. At eight o'clock this morning we were at Lintz, about forty leagues from Vienna; the same town in which, in 1829, the Emperor refused my brother's pardon to the Prince de Laval. We passed half an hour in a good hotel, where we breakfasted whilst they were changing horses. Taken up with the idea that perhaps the next day Alexander would stop there also, I seized a pen and wrote on a quire of paper which I saw on a chest of drawers, 'We expect you at Schœrding, overwhelmed with joy,—P. A.'

"At six o'clock we arrived here, the last town on the frontier. We stop at the post-office, which is so close to the city-gates that from my balcony I see under the archway. Nothing can pass unobserved; it is in that direction we shall first see him coming!

" *Monday, March* 19*th.*—This day seems as if it would never end. His arrival was not promised until tomorrow, but may he not hasten the much-desired moment? In this expectation we cannot rest day or night; and notwithstanding the rain, which is falling in torrents, I cannot tear myself from the balcony."

CHAPTER XXX.

When the jailer had carried away the light, it appeared to me that all my joy was about to vanish on returning into darkness. Hours dragged on without my even thinking of repose, and at times all that had passed seemed only a dream. I repeated to myself aloud what the Director of Police had told me. Accustomed to the noise of my chains, I often stopped, surprised that I no longer heard them. I sought for them, and afterwards began to jump, to convince myself that my legs were free. At last I went to bed, but could not sleep.

Having risen before five o'clock, I waited with the greatest impatience till some one should enter my prison; but the morning was far advanced before any person appeared. I thought for some time that counter-orders had arrived from Vienna, and that I was going to be taken back to Spielberg. At last the door opened, and the Director of Police came to me, followed by the jailer.

"At twelve o'clock," said he, after wishing me good morning, "they will come to take measure for your clothes. Tomorrow at the same hour you shall go out for a short time in a carriage, to accustom yourself to the open air. The keeper has orders to give you all that you ask of him. In three days you will start, and in six you will be with your relations."

The Director sent me some books, which I could not read: the recollections of the world, in which I was going again to live, engrossed my mind. The day appeared endless: the night passed away like the preceding, without a minute's slumber.

In France, the setting at liberty of a state-prisoner by the royal clemency has something that infuses confidence and joy even within the vaults of the prison; but in Austria as much pain is taken to conceal a pardon as to conceal the knowledge of an arrest; the liberated, like the condemned, remains in the most profound secrecy, and none amongst those who surround him dare to congratulate him on his release. I saw no one therefore but the jailer.

At the hour stated the Director came and gave me in charge to Prohasko, the Commissary of Police, who received me on my entrance into Spielberg, and who scarcely recognised me. We descended, and got into a close carriage, which drove through the town; but I looked at nothing.

A quarter of an hour had not elapsed, when we met a long file of carts full of soldiers, differently armed and in different uniforms. Prohasko told me they were Polish refugees, who, after fighting like lions, had been compelled to take refuge, some in Gallicia, others in Prussia. Compassion and admiration so filled my breast, that I could have wished to embrace these brave men, to shake them by the hand, and tell them that I should have been proud to have fought in their ranks.

The first drive lasted an hour, and fatigued me very much; but I had breathed the fresh air in the country, and had been freed from the gloomy sight of bars and gratings. The nearer the period of my departure, the longer the days appeared to be, and the detention more painful. I experienced the greatest desire to see new faces, to speak, to occupy myself with preparations for my journey, and yet was left in solitude and silence.

I cannot describe all that I felt on the morning of the third day. I could have burst open the prison door—I was suffocating! At twelve o'clock Prohasko came to take me to the Augarten. We walked through several alleys in the public garden, the trees of which we could perceive from the top of the platform at Spielberg. The sun was shining, the air was mild, and all breathed the fresh perfumes of spring. I left Prohasko's arm and walked alone in the meadows. It was a delightful sensation, a first return to life. My soul, moved and grateful, communed with God, and I prayed with fervour for the authors of my liberty!

Never did hours appear so long to me as those of the following night. Prohasko had told me that we were to start at four o'clock the next morning; I counted one by one the minutes—the seconds; and when I heard the last strike, when the noise of the carriage fell upon my ear, when the door was opened, and the jailer entered, bringing a light, I remained speechless, motionless, scarcely believing but that this liberty, this departure was a dream!

Prohasko soon appeared, inquiring after my health, examining carefully if I were well clad against the cold. At the same time the Director of the Police, in his dressing-gown and with a lantern in his hand, opened the door facing that of my prison, and wished me a pleasant journey. I thanked him, and without stopping to compliment this man, who during so many years had been the indefatigable executor of all our vexations, I hastened to the carriage.

As long as it was dark I remained still, listening with indescribable pleasure to the noise of the wheels, every revolution of which was bringing me nearer to my sister. At daylight, Prohasko, who had been silent till then, because he thought I was asleep, said to me, "We shall stop tonight at a village not far from Vienna, which we leave on our left; tomorrow at Moëlk; the day after at Lintz; so that we shall arrive at Schœrding on the 20th of March, in the morning.

I should have preferred travelling all night, but our route had been fixed, and we could not alter the arrangements. At ten o'clock we halted at a hamlet to breakfast. The great room of the inn where we stopped was full of company. On entering I experienced at first a sort of trouble and astonishment at finding myself in the midst of strangers: all eyes were turned towards myself. This trouble gave place to the desire of assuring myself, by speaking with them, that I was no longer a prisoner. It was therefore with pain that I broke off a conversation to follow Prohasko into a private room, where he had already got an excellent breakfast prepared.

During his absence I approached a mirror, placed at the end of the room. I cannot express the sad impression which my ghastly aspect and sallow face produced upon me. I had last seen it young and fresh, and now I found it old and careworn. Alas! I was so struck with the change which had rendered me almost unrecognisable even to myself, that I burst into tears, exclaiming, "Ah, what will be my sister's sorrow on seeing me thus aged and broken!"

Prohasko found me on his return seated near the table, my head supported by one of my hands, weeping. He hastily inquired what was the matter with me. I did not answer at first; but he insisted with so much kindness, that I did not hesitate to reply. "Ten years have passed since I saw my features—since I looked in a glass; and I have just witnessed in this the traces of captivity which will never be effaced."

"You must not think of that," he answered; "you are still young, and a few years of liberty will be sufficient to repair the evil. Believe me, your days will be happy for the future."

I listened to him. I endeavoured even to believe his consoling words, but gloom again took possession of my heart, with the conviction that I was no longer fitted for the world. To divert my attention, Prohasko spoke to me on the road of the events which had happened in France since 1830,—the three days of July, the embarkation of Charles the Tenth at Cherbourg, and his stay in Scotland,—of king Louis-Philippe, the Poles, and the Greeks.

With what enthusiasm should I have heard this news some years before,—with what eagerness I should have questioned the Commissary, and have read the newspapers that I found in all the inns! Alas! I remained cold and unmoved; and I felt then more bitterly than ever to what a degree of indifference and intellectual dejection the tortures of Spielberg had reduced me.

The second day we crossed the Danube at Krems, and in the course of it gained the road from Vienna to Schœrding. Hearing from my companion that this was the route my sister must have travelled, I failed not to inquire at every post whether they had provided horses for Madame Andryane. No one could give me satisfactory information. My impatience became so great, that I begged Prohasko to pursue our journey without stopping; he replied that he could not act contrary to his instructions.

I became extremely uneasy when they told us at a tollgate, where the names of all travellers are inscribed, that my sister's was not in the register.

On entering Lintz we received the same answer. Prohasko, after having installed me in a large room on the first floor, proceeded to the Governor's. Left alone, I was pacing my chamber in sadness, when I perceived, for the first time for many years, an inkstand and paper on a chest of drawers. Something was written on this paper,—it was my sister's writing! she had stopped here! And in the first transports of my joy I ran to all the bells. A servant at last appeared; he told me that my sister and cousin had been there the day before; but he knew nothing more.

Prohasko soon returned: showing the paper I had found, I begged that we should set off immediately and travel all night. But our carriage was out of repair, and we were obliged to delay our departure till three o'clock in the morning. I shall not attempt to describe the anxiety which I experienced as we approached Schœrding; and as to the remainder of my journey to Paris, I shall give it in the words of my sister.

"*Wednesday, March* 20*th.*—Day of eternal happiness, he is restored to us! My God, I thank thee for having chosen me to be the instrument of thy providence and the means of restoring to life a being so good and so unfortunate! At daybreak I was on the balcony, after having prayed God to grant strength and courage to all of us, for I trembled lest the prisoner should suffer from the excess of his emotion. About two o'clock, a postchaise appeared in sight. I called to my cousin, although scarcely able to speak. 'Look! a tall man is getting out of the carriage. It is he, I am certain:—Alexander, answer me!'

"A face, pale and emaciated, turned and raised its eyes towards me on hearing my voice. I could not contain a cry of sorrow. 'Great God! it is he; but how could I have recognised him!' And I fell on a seat and could not find strength or speech.

"My cousin rushed towards the staircase before I was able to stand. He returned leading and supporting my unfortunate brother, who threw himself into my arms, repeating only, with sobs, 'Old—old—dead there without you!'

"There are moments in life which leave a solemn recollection impossible to describe. Our tears and broken words, the expression of his gratitude, and the excess of his emotion,—all may be imagined, but cannot be expressed.

"More than an hour elapsed before we could recover from our agitation. I retired for a short time to my room and relieved myself by a flood of tears. Nothing had prepared me to see him thus—dying, presenting the appearance of an old man by his bent figure and his cadaverous complexion. Poor Alexander! what suffering to effect this! The thought would break the most indifferent heart. When I returned to him, I saw a spark of joy animating his countenance on looking at me sufficiently near to distinguish my features.

"'My poor sister!' he exclaimed: 'the wind of adversity has passed over your hair and has turned it white; but you are not so much altered as I expected, when I consider all the tears I have cost you. And my father too, alas!'

"He then inquired earnestly after his relatives and friends. At the name of the Countess Confalonieri I made an effort to conceal the truth from him. 'She is an angel,' replied I; 'we will speak of her hereafter. And her unfortunate Frederick?'

"'Ah, my sister, that you see me again you must thank him. He has been my support—and I have left him alone, inconsolable! the recollection of him never quits me.'

"We longed to hear from Alexander what had been his sensations on learning his pardon. When he had regained sufficient calmness he related to us all that had passed since his release. He had scarcely concluded this interesting recital before Prohasko returned, and in conformity with his instructions he intrusted the prisoner to my responsibility, until we should get out of the Austrian dominions. Whilst my cousin wrote home and Prohasko drew up a report of his mission, Alexander took a seat by my side, and said to me in a subdued voice, 'My dearest sister, I feel the necessity of relieving my heart by speaking of those I love; but I scarcely dare to question you. I apprehend that after having been buried so long, I only re-enter the world to weep over irreparable misfortunes. Have I other losses to mourn besides that of my father? You say nothing of the Countess Confalonieri: alas! are my presentiments realised? is her unaccountable silence the effect of death?'

"'Theresa has received the reward of her virtues,' I replied: 'too pure for this world, she has returned to her native place in Heaven!'

"'What a blow for my poor friend! Thus forlorn, supposing that he ever recovered his liberty, he would only be restored to a dreary and hopeless existence.'

"'I likewise regret the angel to whom I am indebted for your preservation; but at this moment you are too exhausted, and I conjure you to calm yourself.'

"It was in fact time to put an end to his emotions.

My cousin slept in the same room with him in order to give him prompt assistance in case of need; for his health is in so precarious a state that we cannot pay him too much attention. I have not yet been able to collect my thoughts. His rapid transition from the bloom and vigour of youth to the wanness and decrepitude of old-age drives me to distraction. In spite of all I had anticipated, I was far from suspecting that the ravages of the dungeon would be so horrible to behold.

"*Bavaria, Wednesday, March* 21*st.*—We have at length quitted the dominions of the Emperor: we breathe freely. I feel a relief which it is impossible to express; for during the last two days I had been dreading, I know not why, that my brother might again be snatched away from me. Owing to this fear I was unable to shut my eyes the whole night.

"*Munich, Thursday, March* 22*nd.*—This day has glided away with extreme swiftness: we have spent it in listening to my brother's account of his sufferings. What an accumulation of torments! what refinement of cruelty in his persecutors! Poor Confalonieri! how I must love, commiserate, and admire him! The thoughts of Alexander are constantly riveted on his ill-fated friend: he is insensible to all pleasure, and repeats incessantly that no joy can reach his heart so long as his brother in misfortune remains alone, and destitute of every comfort.

"*Augsburg, Friday, March* 23*rd.*—We left Munich this morning at twelve o'clock. Before our departure we took a drive, in order to see the external appearance of the city, especially the new quarter, which is renowned for its magnificence; but all absorbed in the conversation of my brother, I scarcely saw the places we visited. He spoke so warmly of the happiness he still hoped to receive in the fulfilment of his duty to God and man,—he expressed so firm a determination to recompense for the past by devotion, by an irreproachable conduct and a studious life,—that with tears of delight streaming down my cheeks I was only able to say: 'Your words do me good: they prove that your heart may still recover its former sensibility.'

"'Pardon me, sister, if I appear indifferent to everything,—even to your tenderness: my feelings, worn out by long suffering, are deadened for ever. Your kind attentions will not revive them.'

"On returning to our hotel, we found my cousin much out of spirits. Some letters from Paris had informed him of his wife's illness, and he is consequently anxious to proceed homewards rapidly. Alexander is so weak that it would have been advisable not to go more than fifteen or twenty leagues a day; but our friend's anxiety must be first considered.

"*Goeppingen, Saturday, March 24th.*—Last night at Augsburg my poor brother slept for the first time since he quitted Spielberg. He appears to gain strength, and is now able to walk down stairs without difficulty; but his affections as well as his hopes seem extinct. I have not yet seen him smile. The sight of a fine landscape or brilliant sunshine does not reanimate him. I no longer find in him that warmth with which he used to thank us at Milan.

"*Strasbourg, Monday, May 26th.*—At two o'clock we crossed the bridge of Kehl, and we were in France! Here we stopped, without giving any explanation to our prisoner, who from exhaustion had fallen into a sort of lethargy. We left the carriage; he followed us mechanically. The tricoloured flag floated over the Custom-house; on perceiving it he cried: 'France, France! my former flag!' Then bursting into tears, he threw himself into my arms.

"*Sarrebourg, Tuesday, March 27th.*—This morning at eight o'clock my brother asked if I would go out with him. 'We have not yet thanked God in his own temple,' said he: 'come with me, sister; I am in France, and by your side. What fervent prayers my heart ought to offer up!'

"We entered the Church, and there throwing himself on his knees he wept for a length of time.

"*Paris, Friday, March 30th.*—Our rapid journey is over. We find Paris plunged in a general consternation: it is invaded by the cholera. At La Ferté-sous-Souarre we learned this calamity. On reading this fatal news in the Gazette I was unable to repress an exclamation of horror: Alexander was not in the least moved by it. This was to me a fresh indication of the profound dejection of his soul, of his indifference to all the things of this world. I am overwhelmed with gloom and painful presentiments, when my restoration of the prisoner to his family and country should only be a source of joy. But if snatched from Spielberg merely to fall a prey to this pestilence! Oh God! thy decrees are inscrutable; let Thy will be done!"

I here conclude these Memoirs, which the mere desire to speak of myself would never have induced me to publish. I call Heaven to witness that a nobler motive has guided my pen. I alone, among the prisoners of Spielberg, had it in my power to make known the whole truth without bringing upon my family or my friends the displeasure of the Austrian government. I have therefore deemed it my duty, after the liberation of my companions in misfortune, to break the silence which the position of the Italians obliges them to keep.

Whatever may have been my delusions, I shall never repent having proclaimed that which no other person could have said with more frankness; nor shall I cease to thank God for the gracious compensation he has granted to me for my long trials, in opening my heart to his Holy Word, and in restoring me to the love of my friend and the esteem of my countrymen. He has completed the measure of his ineffable goodness by giving me as a companion the adorable being my imagination had conceived in the days of adversity, the woman so perfectly identified with my past existence, that she causes me daily to praise the merciful Providence which bestowed her.

APPENDIX.

[In the hope of rendering this work more acceptable to the reader, I add a few more particulars furnished by Maroncelli. Pellico's narrative being already translated, the following pages will complete the version into English of all that has in substance appeared in other languages concerning the cruelties inflicted on the State-prisoners of Spielberg.—F. P.]

My mind shrinks from detailing the vexations we had to endure on each inspection of our cells. The Austrians have always been considered as the problem, or rather enigma, of the human race. They are good people, yet they will commit any cruelty with a kind of religious feeling: they have in their conscience no standard of absolute right or wrong; and only perceive such things through the imperial will. The most degrading action, when the Emperor is to be served, becomes ennobling, and is executed with devotion, nay, with enthusiasm, as if it were an act of heroism of which anybody might feel proud. No official of any other German State, however humble in condition, would have stooped to the duties which Governors-General of Police, Senators and Aulic-Counsellors came to perform in the dungeons of Spielberg. I will give a few instances of Austrian servility.

The Director-General of Police and Counsellor of State came to make us the first inquisitorial inspection on the 17th of March, 1825. The dungeon first searched was ours. There were seven cells; the Director-General began work at seven o'clock in the morning with lights, and only concluded at seven o'clock in the evening with lights. Considering that our furniture consisted of two sacks of straw, two blankets, two jugs and two wooden spoons, it is difficult to conceive what could prolong the visit for twelve hours; but this may prove with what zealous minuteness he must have proceeded. The two sacks of straw were carried out on the platform, in order to ascertain whether there was anything concealed. The blankets were shaken, the jugs emptied. Afterwards we were stripped, our shirt was taken off and put on again, and thus we were left.

The Director-General then drew a knife out of his pocket, and began to rip open all the seams of our trowsers and jacket. Our very shoes underwent a similar review; but I interrupted it, being worked up into a state of indignation such as I had never before experienced. This operation appeared to me so base and so unbecoming to him who performed it, that I felt ashamed of being before a worm in human likeness, decorated with orders, and thus dragging in the dirt the imperial dignity in the name of which he acted. On the other hand I saw poor Pellico, with his teeth chattering with cold and fever,—Pellico for three quarters of an hour in his shirt waiting until his Excellency the Counsellor of State should conclude his iniquitous work! I could bear this no longer, and clenching my fists, in a voice choked with rage, I desired him to give a blanket to my friend.

He refused; but fortunately, before my blind fury drove me to a rash act, the good Krall interposed and obtained a covering for my sick companion. Nevertheless this brutality caused him a severe illness.

The assistant of the Director-General was going to remove a certain unclean utensil, when he bade him desist and let Schiller examine it himself. The keeper with undisguised reluctance took away the lid, and re-covered it immediately. But his Excellency cried out, "Stop, stop!" and ordered Schiller to take it: the good man, after some hesitation, pulled out his handkerchief, wrapped up his hand, and drew out the vial; then exhibiting it to the gaze of the Director-General, he said in a trembling voice, and as it were spelling, that it was me-di-ci-ne he had brought me himself about an hour before. I must here remark, that the noble reluctance of Schiller proceeded from his being, not an Austrian, but a Swiss.

The day after, we were summoned to account for the things seized. Pellico for a wooden fork and a pair of spectacles; myself, for an eye-glass and a wooden fork.

Addressing Silvio, the Director-General said, "Who has given you permission to keep these spectacles?"

"All, and no one," answered my friend: "for these three years that I have been at Spielberg, they have always rested upon my nose. His Excellency the Governor, the Commandant of Spielberg, and even yourself have always seen and allowed them."

"I have never observed them,—I do not remember. They are an infraction of the regulation; I cannot return them."

It is impossible to conceive how miserable this privation rendered Pellico. He said, "Your severity surpasses that of the Emperor: his Majesty condemned me to fifteen years' *carcere duro*, but did not take away my sight. You, indeed, blind me."

The Director shrugged his shoulders and passed to another question. "A fork!" he cried; "do you know that a fork is a great violation of discipline?"

Silvio was good and patient, but he could not put up with certain stupid exactions, when they were represented as necessary to good order. It appeared to him that good order could not be disturbed by our being permitted the use of a wooden fork. He tried in vain to drive into the Director-General's head, which was certainly as wooden as our forks, the harmlessness of such a concession; it was of no use. On this and a thousand similar occasions, the phrase so essentially characteristic of Austrian servility, and so common in Italy, naturally occurred to our minds, and we exclaimed amongst ourselves, "Get back, you and the wall!" But this time Pellico did not stop here: in an accent unknown to all the prisoners who till then had worn the infamous dress of a convict, he thundered, "Will the Austrian monarchy then crumble, if instead of eating dirtily with our fingers we do it with a piece of wood?"

Count Mitrosky, then Governor-General of Moravia, came to see us, and expressed much concern at what had happened; but he assured us that he could not take upon himself to restore our forks and the spectacles, because the affair was pending.

"And where is this great matter of the wooden forks pending?" we asked.

"At Vienna, my friends, at Vienna; before the Emperor himself."

"The seizure of the wooden forks is more ridiculous than cruel; but your Excellency will allow that we were only condemned to the *carcere duro*, and not to blindness."

"Most certainly," he answered affected. Then taking off his own spectacles quite unconsciously, he looked affrighted at the darkness in which he remained, felt pity on Pellico, and pressed him to accept them. My companion returned thanks and declined the offer without giving offence. Count Mitrosky left us, showing signs of much emotion, and the next day the spectacles and the eye-glass were restored. I cannot say whether this was in consequence of an imperial decision; but I know that for the forks we had a contrary decree.

I have here given a specimen of the visits which we received once a month from the Director-General of Police; but before these the Commandant of Spielberg also inspected our cells of his own accord. And as the Director of Police controlled the Commandant, so was he himself controlled by an Aulic-Counsellor, or a Minister of State. For this purpose the Emperor sent a similar personage from Vienna every year, concealing his coming even from the Governor-General of the Province, in order that we might all be taken by surprise. The first of these High-Inspectors was the Baron Münch von Bellinghausen; the second, the Count or Baron von Vogel; the third, a nameless individual to whom they gave the title of Counsellor of State.

The Barons von Bellinghausen and von Vogel complained especially of a supposed correspondence between ourselves and some persons without. They could find out nothing; but to quiet the suspicions of the Emperor he was provided with an exact drawing of the corridor in which our dungeons were situated, showing the communication from it to our platform, and the immediate entrance from this into the chapel. The doors, windows, and openings of every kind had been walled up, so that we could not even be seen by the convicts. The plan was accompanied by an horary, from which his Majesty could perceive that at almost every hour our dens were opened to admit water, bread, dinner, the rounds, etc.—that cell No. 1. walked at a certain time; cell No. 2. at another, and and so on. Thus by the reports sent him after each monthly inspection, he saw whether any innovations were introduced in the system of discipline he had himself devised for us.

The yearly visits were still more severe. Baron Münch von Bellinghausen discovered on Foresti's pallet a pair of knitted woollen gloves. On leaving the cell he remonstrated with the Governor-General Count Mitrosky: the Governor reproved the Commandant, and the Commandant reprimanded his inferiors, who all attested that similar gloves were allowed to the convicts, being indispensable on account of cold, and even ordered by the physician. Notwithstanding this, the gloves were taken away.

The next day we were called to account. "Who gave you these gloves?" inquired the Director-General of Police; "who permitted you to wear them?"

"They are of our own making," replied Foresti; "and we have used them by your own permission."

"I have permitted no such thing,—it is not true."

"You forget, sir. When the winter set in, as we were obliged to knit stockings, you allowed us to employ our wool and needles to make gloves, like those of the convicts, that we might protect our hands from the severity of the season."

"Knitting stockings is the imperial command, and therefore your bounden duty; but to apply the wool and needles given you for that purpose to make gloves, is a downright transgression."

Thus again did these good people drive us to use words which it would have been much better not to have uttered; but our endurance had been worn out by a thousand other similar vexations; and this strange reasoning appeared to us to proceed not from real but assumed imbecility. Mockery and cruelty united could surely not have devised a more refined barbarity.

I have seen men who had endured every other mental and physical pain with composure, become frantic under the torture of knitting stockings. When I sawed wood, or made lint, my hand alone was fettered, and my mind soared at pleasure; but in making stockings, my mind, eye, and hand were unrelentingly tied down to the needles, and I could not think;—a double bondage—and this second a thousand times more intolerable than the first. Not to think of my mother and sisters,—of my own sufferings! Physically also this work was disgusting and unhealthy. They brought us a large ball of woollen thread, steeped in rank oil and lard. Our den was immediately filled with a stench, which constantly caused us maddening head-aches. We complained repeatedly of this infliction, but without effect: the Commandant employed all sorts of harshness and menaces to make us perform our tasks. I have seen Munari, a venerable man of sixty, who had been chief magistrate at Bologna, Ferrara, and Modena, and who bore with astonishing fortitude a host of bodily sufferings by which he was continually afflicted, weep like a child at being obliged to knit one pair of stockings in a week. Those who did not fulfil their task were menaced with privation of food, with flogging, and *reports to Vienna.*

"I also will make reports to Vienna," I answered one day to the Commandant. "Do you think that the Emperor will refuse to exempt from this work a man who, in consequence of the amputation of his leg, cannot for any length of time remain in a sitting position without severe attacks of cramp, and who is so affected with arthritis as to be unable to hold the needles?"

Pellico added, "If my friend writes to the Emperor, he will tell him such things as will make him shudder. All the great personages who came from Vienna have assured us that his Majesty granted us this work as a relief; and you have distorted his benevolent intention into an intolerable punishment. It is you, and not we, who will incur the displeasure of the Emperor."

The second grandee who came to see us, Count or Baron von Vogel, raised a great uproar about a small pillow which he found on the couch of Confalonieri. The history of this great infraction is as follows. On learning that her husband was condemned to death, the Countess hastened to Vienna to implore his life; but in spite of her utmost endeavours, the death-warrant was signed by the Emperor and despatched to Italy. The moment she received this distressing intelligence, though very late at night, she flew in despair to recommend her consort to the humanity of the Empress, and then immediately set off for Milan, harassed by the dread of arriving too late to see him once more. During the agony of her journey, which she performed without stopping or tasting food, this pillow had supported her throbbing brow, and absorbed her tears; and when by her Majesty's exertions Confalonieri's life was spared, the Countess sent him the pillow as a memorial of her conjugal tenderness. The present, faithfully delivered, and received with gratitude, was cherished by the prisoner as an invaluable treasure: the numerous authorities who had seen it had all respected it; but Baron von Vogel deemed it irregular, and took it away!

A sparrow had found its way into the cell of our fellow-captive Bachiega, which he nursed with the fondest care. During the search, when the pallet was overhauled, the little bird flew from its hiding-place, and was seized. The jailers were dismissed, for their want of vigilance, and the prisoner threatened with a report to the Emperor concerning his *infraction of discipline*.

Poor Villa then said to the Director of Police, who was present, "When you write to his Majesty about the sparrow, I beg you to mention that I am bald and in great want of a wig: the physician and the Commandant have assured me they have no authority to procure me one."

The Director could not refuse to forward our requests: accordingly he sent this also; and two months after, the Emperor desired the Governor to learn from the Commandant what was the practice with the common convicts in cases of baldness. The Commandant answered they were allowed a woollen cap. Two more months elapsed before his Majesty authorised the Governor not to make any difference between Villa and the felons; but our companion did not accept this imperial boon, because the woollen cap heated his head too much. A third application was made, and after a further delay of two months a wig was granted. I do not know whether the Emperor had written with his own hand that it should not be of human hair; but it is certain that the executor of his Majesty's intention, instead of providing Villa with an ordinary wig, only gave him a wretched tissue of dog's hair.

Our last inspector, whose name we could not learn, was a Counsellor of State. Up to the month of July, 1830, we had no other visitors, and those persons who have affirmed the contrary were ill-informed. The Archduke Charles Francis, the second son of the Emperor, came to Spielberg; but he did not consent to see the state-prisoners. We attributed his refusal to shame, and were pleased to find this feeling in the young Prince.

It has been reported that the Archduke Rudolph, Archbishop of Olmütz, with some member of the Duke of Modena's family, (I do not remember who,) were admitted into our dungeons. This is not true. It has been stated also that "Confalonieri, the proud, ungovernable Confalonieri," during this supposed visit, kept his back turned to the Princes, and would not uncover his head; and that the jailer was compelled to knock his cap off. This is an infamous calumny, which ought to bring shame to its inventor; for the high-minded, magnanimous Confalonieri is not only an ornament to his age and country, but would do honour to any age, past or future.

This great man has moreover been slandered with respect to religion, and it has been asserted that he alone had refused to fulfil its duties; and that in consequence of his obstinacy he had been subjected to severer confinement than his companions. This is equally false: the truth of the matter is as follows.

Don Stephano Paolowitz came to Spielberg with a pretended excommunication from the Pope, in which he was pleased to imagine that we were all comprised; and he offered to restore us to the bosom of the Church, on condition that we should give up the names of such persons as we might know, who had attempted to overthrow the Austrian or any other government. We answered that the Papal anathema did not regard us at all, since it described the Carbonari as promoters of every crime; while those amongst us who belonged to that society had only joined it as the best means of exercising the noblest and most difficult Christian virtues. To this we added that we were anxious to receive the beneficent consolations of religion, but that we could never do so at the price of infamy.

Reader! whether you be a countryman of mine or a foreigner, let me caution you against lending a too ready ear to evil reports of those who are absent. If accused wrongfully, they cannot defend themselves, and the slander, if accredited, may prove injurious not only to individuals, but to a nation, and even to the whole of mankind; sometimes retarding a social progress which *one* might have the power of forwarding, while *the many* will perhaps be unable to accomplish it for ages.

THE END.

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